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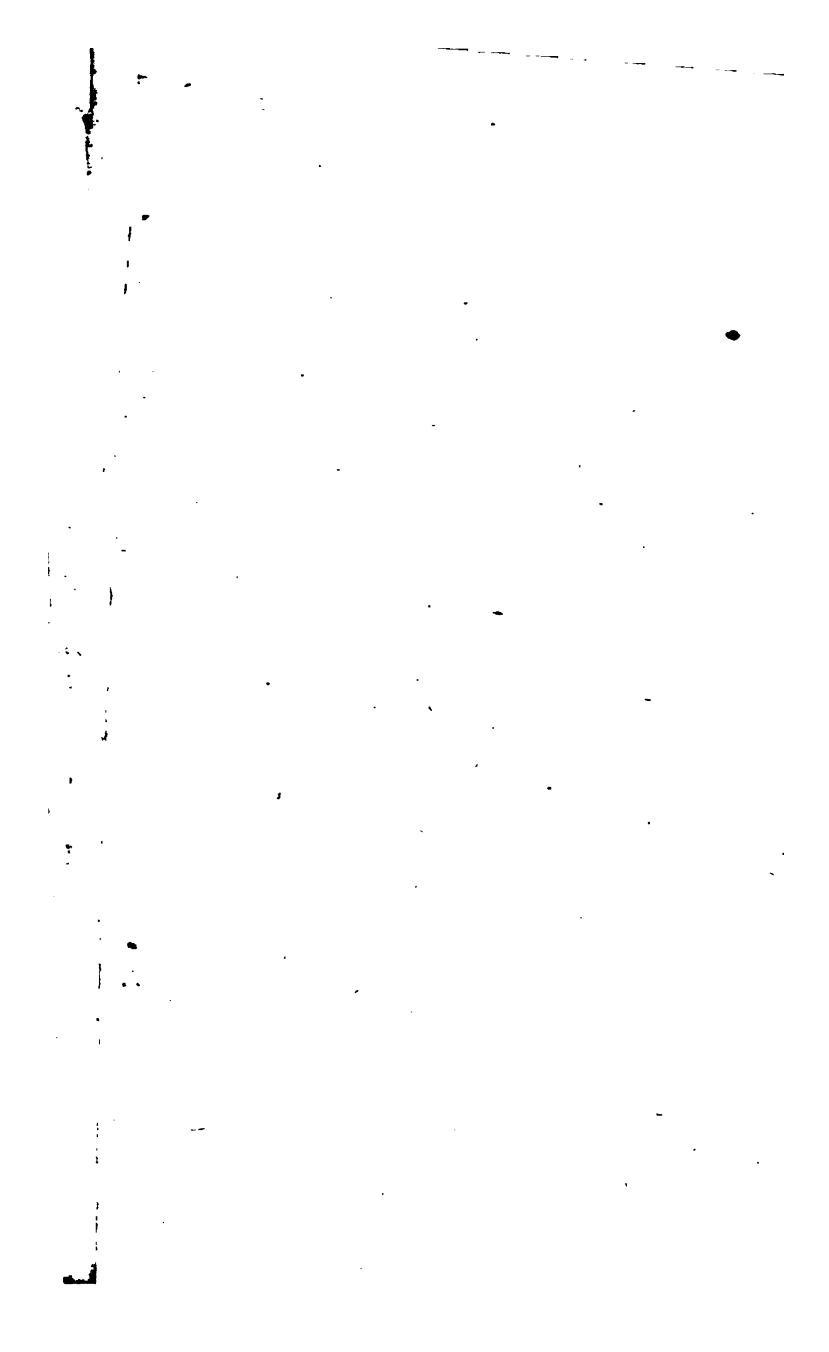
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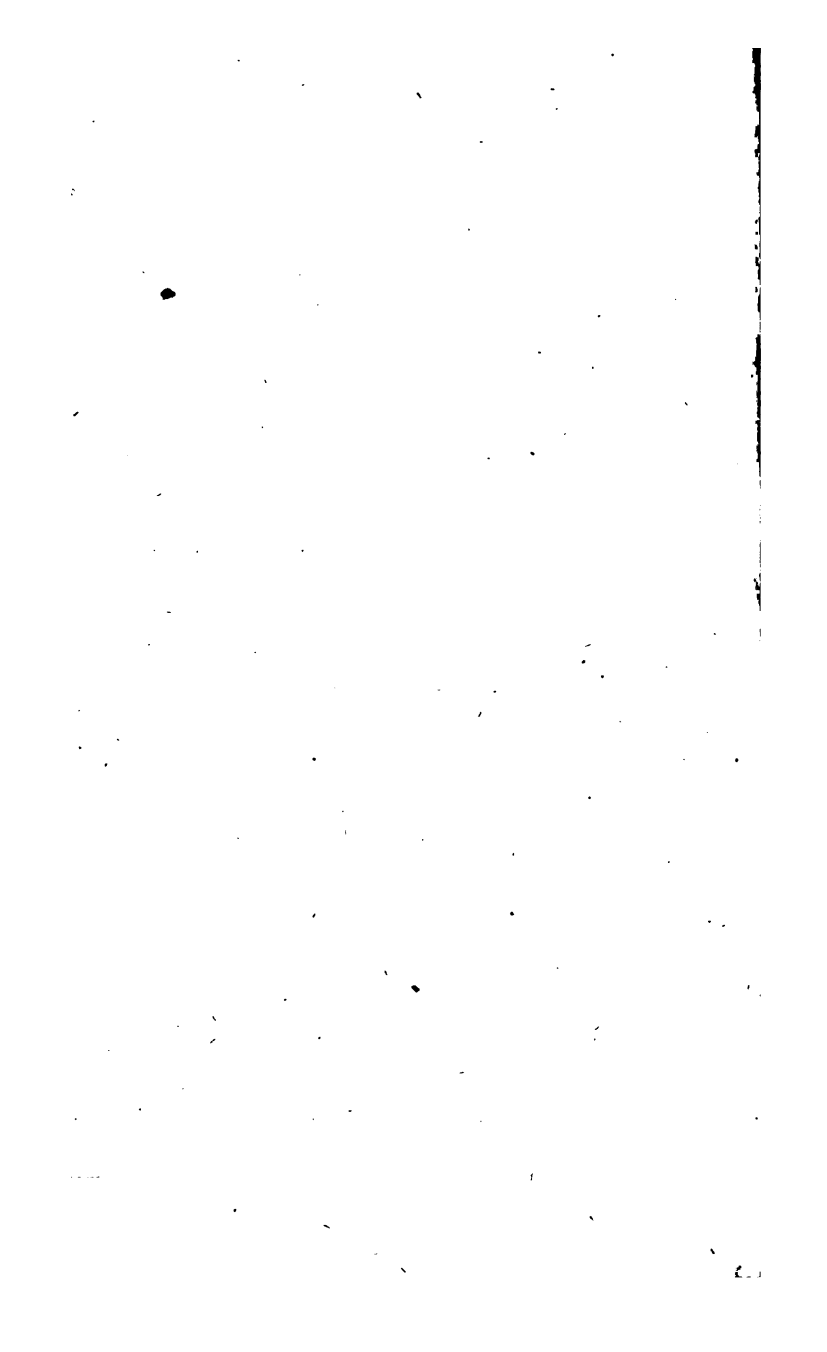
FROM

Robert J. Haines,  
of Boston.

18 Oct., 1889.









THE  
ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN.

Written in *FRENCH* by

*Jacques*  
*M. D U B O S C Q,*

A

FRANCISCAN, COUNSELLOR  
and PREACHER in ordinary to  
THE KING

In the Year MDCXXX.

---

VOLUME *the* SECOND.

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TRANSLATED BY A  
GENTLEMAN OF CAMBRIDGE.



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# THE ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN.

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## CHAP. I.

### *Of SELF-CONCEIT, and SELF-LOVE.*



**A**FFECTI<sup>O</sup>N commonly follows esteem, and the love we have for any object seems to arise from the knowledge we have of it; so that the love of ourselves depends upon the opinion we conceive of our own merit, and the one is so closely connected with the other, that I am obliged to treat of them together, in order to shew how very rarely the knowledge and love of ourselves are found together. The understanding in this

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respect errs before the will, and the excessive love that many have for themselves is merely owing to their ignorance ; if they knew themselves as they ought, they would be ashamed of such partial love ; there is scarce any point in morality of greater concernment to women than this ; for provided they are not mistaken in the sentiment they ought to have for their own persons, they would seldom err in that which they ought to have for others.

The knowledge of themselves would render them more virtuous and better satisfied ; it is their whole defence as well as ornament. They say *Pallas* \* had a mirrour for her shield, the looking upon which was a sufficient defence to her against her enemies. And indeed, there can be no better defence either against calumny or flattery than the true knowledge of ourselves ; it is the easiest way of resisting those that either blame or praise us for what we are not ; it is the way to become invincible, either to injurious slander or unjust commendation : Put to make this matter plainer, I shall first shew wherein consists whatever is useful and commendable in the good opinion we entertain of ourselves, and wherein the same may prove dangerous and of bad consequence, particularly to the fair sex.

Since love depends upon knowledge, knowledge upon the object in question, why may we not be allowed, in consequence of our

\* Hom. Odyss. lib. x. ver. 297.

knowing

knowing the good we have, to love it? Why on this account we should be thought guilty of arrogance, I cannot conceive: For where is the danger of saying that God hath given us a good disposition, when it hath pleased him so to do, any more than in saying, such a disposition, be it what it will, is his gift?

And why may we not be allowed to see what is good in our soul by means of self-knowledge, as to observe the good features in a face by means of a mirror? Would it be humility to say white is black; or that we are sick when we are well? Must we view ourselves in all other respects but that wherein we have some excellence, or consider ourselves only with regard to our blemishes? Thus to fix our view upon our imperfections only, is to do as the flies that settle not upon glass, but on something that is more rough and unpolished; this is not to know ourselves, but to be ignorant of our better part.

If there be any merit in us, it is blindness not to see it; and if we see it, it would be ungrateful not to acknowledge it. We must not, to shun vanity, incur the charge of ingratitude, and by flying from one fault run into another. There are ways of uniting truth with humility, and practising both these virtues together. To avoid the imputation of vanity we need only confess our dependence; there can be no harm in saying, it hath pleased God to bestow such or such a favour upon us; this is rather to de-

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clare our happiness than to boast our deserts ; we may affirm that Heaven hath been kind to us, without saying that it is no more than what is due to our merit.

*Aristotle* will not allow the virtuous man to love himself, but the virtuous may † ; “ *because, says he, it would be against the order of things, for the guilty to love in themselves that which deserves hatred, and the innocent to hate that in themselves which is worthy of Love. It is necessary, he adds, that they who have imperfections should see them, in order to correct and amend them, and that they who have any natural advantages should likewise know it, in order to improve them by due cultivation.*” The knowledge we have of any good is apt to give us courage, and to animate us to something still better ; as they who have a good voice sing where there is an echo, with a better grace, because the plausive sound makes them more sprightly ; so when we consider any good action that we have done, the joy we receive therefrom inspires us with an ambition to do somewhat more ; so that a good opinion of ourselves raises and encourages us to advance in goodness, whereas a contrary opinion serves only to discourage and slacken our endeavours.

I am not speaking of that high opinion which some women have of themselves, and which

† *Ethic. lib. ix. cap. 8. On self-love. Moral. lib. 2. cap. 14.*



makes them seem rather impudent than bold, but of that opinion only which modesty permits and humility approves ; I mean that decent assurance which succeeds better in indifferent things than a rustic bashfulness in things more rare and excellent. I own there are enow who have too good an opinion of their Persons ; but however fairly they carry it, and whatever love they may engage, they would be very sorry that others should have the same sentiment they have with regard to what more intimately concerns them ; they are very easy in others not knowing what they know themselves, because if self-love flatters us, there is a remorse within which does not ; and of imperfections, as well as of crimes, there are few that can absolve themselves, when they are made their own judges.

We are as often envious of what others possess, as we are fond of what we have ourselves ; and it is sometimes more difficult to give us a good opinion of ourselves than it is to take it away from us ; much less is required to dishearten than to embolden us. There must be many good actions to make us assume proper courage, and but one bad one is enough to cast us down.

Further, if it be not permitted to know the good or evil that is in us, wherein would the guilty differ from the innocent ? If the one saw not their vices in order to conceive horror at them, and the other their virtues in order to

## 6 *The ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN.*

comfort them? Seeing that conscience makes the just bold and the impious to tremble, whence comes this but from the good or bad opinion that we have of ourselves? And indeed, how could virtue ever find satisfaction, if humility was to blind her eyes, that she might not see herself?

Lastly, the greatest disorder that a bad opinion of ourselves creates is, that it obligeth us to yield too much to that of others; 'tis a fault equally blameable to trust too much to our own opinion, as not to trust to it at all. There are none who create so much trouble to themselves, as those who aim at the approbation of all the world; they look not after truth but numbers; their actions and life is as a picture, which a painter draws according to the advice of every beholder that pretends to instruct him, and which he consequently finds at last an absurd monster. As such a one succeeds better in painting a piece according to the rules of his art, than by following the instructions of every critic, so we should often act more wisely by following our own opinion than by giving attention to so many counsellors.

So far then a good opinion of ourselves is sometimes necessary; let us now see wherein the same may prove detrimental and of bad consequence. How great the mischief of self-love! What disorders does it create, since the most beautiful creatures in the world are rendered  
ugly

ugly by this infamous passion ? And that very angel, which shone more bright and splendid than the morning-star, became hereby the prince of darkness\* : At least we may learn from hence, that as the love of God dwells not but in the contempt we have for ourselves, so the love of ourselves dwells not but in the breast that is remiss in its love towards God ; we may learn from hence, that when self-love makes us aspire to thrones and high-places, God casts us down to the abyss below ; and that tho' we have the form and spirit of an angel, as soon as we begin passionately to love ourselves, we become altogether disagreeable and incur the hatred of all the world.

And indeed, this is no more than what is just, since commonly they who are ambitious to receive respect from all, seldom vouchsafe to render it to any one themselves ; those who approve of every thing they do themselves, think every thing amiss that is done by others ; and I am not at all surpris'd that they should entertain an indifference and contempt for all the world, whose whole esteem and love are ingrossed by their own dear selves. What blindness is this ! since every one cannot but have some love for themselves, we should consider how tyrannical it is to claim that regard from others, which we never design to repay. We cannot bear the least contempt ourselves, and

\* Isa. xiv. 12.

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yet are unwilling to shew the least respect ; we expect that others should have as much patience as we have vanity ; without considering that self-love promiseth superiority to others as well as to ourselves, and that they, whom perhaps we esteem so much below us, claim the same privilege over us.

Herein consists particularly the tyranny of self-love ; but it so happens sometimes that, by the permission of providence, none are more contemptible than those who affect an universal esteem ; they even make themselves quite intolerable. As *Pompey* passed through the city of *Athens*, some one, in honour to him, wrote on all the public places, *That he was so much a god, as he thought himself man*\*. But as this was said in praise of his modesty, and sweetness of temper, we may say of the vanity of many, they are as much brutes as they think themselves rational. Indeed when we shew that we have too good an opinion of ourselves, there is no one but must needs have the reverse ; as there are no defects but what humility may make tolerable, so there is no merit but what vanity will render odious.

Let us examine further into the reason of this ; when we give glory to ourselves, we oblige others justly to deny it us. Praise, as well as

\* Εὖ ὅσον ὢν ἀνθρώπος οἶδας, ἐπὶ τοσούτων αἱ θεοί.  
*Plutarch. in vita Pompeii.*

beauty,

beauty, is a foreign good; the one depends upon the eyes of the beholder, the other on the tongues of those who admire us; as beauty is for others, praise is from others. No one owes it to us any longer, when we have taken it of ourselves. Whatever perfections we may have, others have no reason to pay any thing to our merit, when we submit nothing to their liberty, and tyrannically seize what we ought to wait for from their courtesy.

It is very wrong to present ourselves with honour: Self-love commits a robbery herein, since, if honour belongs rather to the giver than to the receiver, for a man to bestow praises on himself is to enrich himself with a foreign good, which he cannot possess justly but by way of gift. It is to act as *Epicurus* did, who, having a long while made love to glory but in vain, was determined to take her by force, and enjoy by violence what he could not obtain by courtesy. To give honour to ourselves, and to feed upon our own opinions is like the poet's *Ere-siæbon*\*, who was so pressed with hunger that at last he eat his own flesh.

Thus a good opinion of ourselves begets contempt, and self-love procures the hatred of all that know us; but further to evince the unprofitableness thereof, let us see what persons they are that are most subject to this folly: It generally happens, that they who have the least

\* Ovid. Met. lib. viii. *ad finem*.

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merit have the best opinion of themselves; the greatest of their imperfections is, that they know them not. In considering what many are in their own opinion, and what they are in fact, I am persuaded that several mistake themselves for other people; fabulous history gives us an excellent example of this error, and a truer representation of self-love cannot be found than in that of *Polypheme* \*.

He had but one eye, which look'd horrible in the midst of his forehead; a rake serv'd him for a comb, a scythe for a razor, and the ocean for a glass; yet he thought himself handsome, and worthy a lady's affection. With all his ugliness he was surpris'd that young *Acis*, who challeng'd love from all that had eyes or reason, should stand fairer than himself in the good graces of *Galatea*; thus it is, that the most imperfect impose upon themselves, and even monsters think themselves handsome; thus it is, that self-love never makes a just comparison, especially when we ourselves are both judge and party; seeing that *Polypheme* thought himself more courteous than *Acis*, a frightful *Cyclops* more amiable than a handsome shepherd.

Indeed nature herself would seem unjust in thus adding blindness to those whom she hath given such great defects to, were she not excusable, in that having given them no merit she at least

\* Ovid. lib. xiii. ver. 760. Theocr. Idyll. ii. Lucian.

hath not taken away their opinion of it, lest their knowledge of themselves should make them their own executioners, lest knowing how unworthy they are to live they should choose to die. There are some who really have merit, and others only think they have; where nature hath not bestowed real favours, she at least hath given imaginary ones.

How are some abused in order to content them! What a strange impostor is self-love! It depaints our merits greater, and our faults less than they really are.

And notwithstanding knowledge as well as sight depends upon a proper distance, love or hatred removes us too far, or draws us too near the object; self-love cannot keep a just perspective. As the elements are neither heavy nor light in their own natural place, being there at rest, so we neither see the deformity nor feel the weight of sins that are within us; we must draw them from the centre, to judge truly of their nature and quality; we must transfer sin to another person, and see how blameable it is in him, or otherwise we shall not condemn ourselves for it.

Self-love not only hinders us from knowing our own defects, but also from improving our merit; by thinking that we have those qualities which we have not, but in opinion only, we neglect to acquire those we ought to have in fact. Why should we labour in searching after a good which we think ourselves in full possession of?

Why

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Why should we serve an apprenticeship to a trade that we seem already masters of? This error stops in their career those that have good designs, or brings to decay those who have great possessions; self-love hinders them from coming to perfection, or taking a proper care of what they have; but the desire of virtue as well as that of wealth ought to increase by possession. As there is always something to be sought, there is always something to be desired; and as formerly vanity made \* a great monarch weep at the report of an imaginary world; and when he was in possession of the whole universe, he still found something more to desire; we may learn from hence, that we ought always to aspire to some perfection that we have not; that good men should have the like ambition as conquerors; and that the desire of still rising in virtue, as well as in dominion, is a fire that gathers strength from continual fuel, and a laudable ambition that extends its enterprises beyond the limits of the world.

A good opinion of ourselves is altogether contrary to this holy avarice; it makes us content with little or nothing; we continue poor, because we think ourselves rich; but as an excellent remedy for this, we must consider not so much what we have as what we still want. This is the only way to banish self-conceit, because, by comparing the little good that is in us,

\* Alexander in Quint. Curt. Plutar. in vita Alexandri.  
with



with that which there ought to be, we shall be ashamed instead of being proud, and say with those holy personages of old, after the practice of many virtues, *Let us set about doing good.*

Enough has been said concerning the bad effects of self-love, let us now describe the two principal signs thereof; the first is, that they who have too good an opinion of themselves, desire others to indulge the same passions with them, and scarce ever speak but of their own merit; this is the most visible sign of self-love and self-conceit. As these admire and adore all that they do or think, if we would not disoblige them, we must never contradict them; we must always follow their sentiment, without regarding whether it be contrary or conformable to reason; they know that imitation is a certain sign of love and respect, and therefore they desire that every one should accommodate themselves to their humour. *Omphale* commanded *Hercules* to spin\*; and to continue in the favour of that lady, the hero laid aside his club for the distaff and spindle; such is the vanity of many women, and such the submission of many men. In a word, such women love nothing but themselves, and however fair they carry it, interest is their idol.

Another sign of self-conceit is, that as they are idolaters of their own persons, they seldom speak but of their own excellence; or to be al-

\* *Plutarch*, on old men, &c. *Soph. Trachin.* 360.  
together

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together troublefom and impertinent, if they boast not of their merit, they will give you a long detail of their maladies and misfortunes ; they desire we should either praise or bewail them ; they delight in causing admiration or pity ; nor can we say they are not blameable herein, tho' they boast of virtues which they really have ; for if it be not false, it is vanity. As God was once provoked by a great king at his numbering his people, so will he be offended at our recounting our virtues ; he would not that we should know the number of them, any more than that prince should know the number of his subjects.

Besides, there is oftentimes as much vanity in a man's confessing his imperfections, as in talking of his merit ; there is an ambition in endeavouring to appear humble, and I agree with *Aristotle* †, that *there is sometimes as much arrogance in a man's undervaluing himself, as in boasting* ; and that *the greatest and most dangerous ambition of all, consists in an affectation of humility* ; so that I think *Alexander* much more excusable than *Diogenes*, because this prince dissimbled not his pretensions, whereas the sophist affected a way to glory by turning his back to it. A feigned bashfulness too common in this age ! when we pretend to have a bad opinion of

• 2 Sam. xxiv.

† Ethic. lib. iv. cap. 7. On truth and its extremes.

‡ See *Plutarch's* life of *Alexander*, and on virtue:

ourselves,

ourselves, that others may have a good one; when we blame ourselves, that others may praise us; and lastly, when we fly from glory, as *Tiberius* did from empire\*; I mean, so as to take it ill if our refusal be accepted.



## C H A P. II.

### *Of NOBILITY by INHERITANCE, and by VIRTUE.*

**T**HERE is no doubt but we differ more in the manner of our lives than in birth; and I think it just, what is said by one of the ancients, that all blood is of the same colour, or that there is no other difference in it than what is caused by sickness or health; but there are certain seeds in us, by some call'd half-virtues, and which are not less common to persons of low birth than to those of an illustrious family.

The reason is, that to make any one more excellent than another, nature can bestow but these four favours, beauty, health, strength of body, and a right disposition of its organs; and how often do we see these rich endowments depraved and vitiated by idleness, effeminacy, and luxury? What noblemen excel others in, more commonly ariseth from education than birth.

\* Tacit. Annal. lib. i. Suetonius in vit. Tiber.

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As we see many of mean extraction, who have a benevolent heart, and a generous spirit; so we see many of a good family, that have neither understanding nor courage, and even more imperfections than the dregs of the common people.

As great rivers flow from a small spring, we sometimes meet with very eminent personages of low extraction; *Ipbicrates* \* was the son of a tailor, *Virgil* of a potter, and *Pythagoras* of an irgraver †; the muses were poor, and if noble, it was not upon account of their puissance but their skill in the sciences. So much for art; and with regard to fortune, among the men I shall mention only *C. Marius*, who tho' of mean birth raised himself by his virtue to such grandeur, that he was seven times consul of *Rome*, and often preserv'd the city from the attack of its most powerful enemies ‡. And among the women I shall only name *Athenais*, who, being the daughter of a philosopher, acquired so great credit for her merit and beauty, that *Theodosius* took her to wife, and she became one of the most illustrious among the princeesses of famous memory.

\* A famous general of *Athens*, who, being reproach'd by a certain coxcomb of his low birth, said, *True, sir, I intend to be the first of my family, as you are the last of yours.* Plutarch. Aphorism. Xenoph. Hist. Græc.

† His name was Mnesarchus.

‡ See his life in *Plutarch*.

From

From whence we learn, that it is not so much to be born great as to raise ourselves ; what an idle fancy is it to value ourselves upon a nobility to which we have contributed nothing, and in which the painters on a wall, or the epitaphs upon a monument, bear a greater share than ourselves ! as if true nobility ought not to appear more in our actions than in a coat of arms, or upon a medal. We should rather have regard to our end than to our birth ; it matters little from whom we have received life so it be good. If our cradle be not illustrious, we should endeavour to make our tomb so ; this will be more glorious for us, because the one depends upon accident, the other upon our own probity.

What satisfaction is there in seeing weeds spring up in a fine field, or a false stone set in gold ? As no honour can redound to a prostitute from her being born of a chaste mother ; so no infamy can accrue to a virtuous woman from her being born of vicious parents ; the one but heightens her glory hereby, the other her disgrace. Of what advantage was it to *Cbam* \* that he was the son of *Noah* ? Or what disservice to *Abraham*, that he was born of *Thara* †, and that he who was so zealous in the service of the true God, was begot by a father who was an idolater ? It is as ridiculous for a man to boast his being born

\* Gen. ix. 22. † Or Terah, Gen. xi. 26.  
Joh. xxiv. 2. 1 Chron. i. 26. Luke iii. 34.

of illustrious parents, as for a dwarf to brag of his being descended from Giants; and who thinks the stature of his ancestors can excuse the imperfection of his own: What can be more shameful than to found our reputation upon the virtue of others?

If the goodness of parents hath sometimes seemed to descend upon their children, how often have we seen the contrary? Seldom does the merit of our ancestors reach down to us. Virtue, in descending from its first source, acts the contrary part to rivers; the origin of these is small, but they swell and expand themselves as they flow along; whereas virtue, however great at first, gradually decreaseth in proportion to the distance from its first spring; from an head of gold we descend to feet of clay: And methinks *Aristotle* speaks like a philosopher, when he says, that *we receive more from our fathers than from our grandfathers; and that virtue, the more recent, is the better and stronger.*

And yet to hear many boast of the splendor of their ancestors, one would think their virtue must infallibly descend upon them, as the genus descends in the species, and the species in individuals. Ridiculous fancy! as if no one could ever degenerate from his race, or virtue depended not more upon our choice and liberty than upon our birth! Besides, whatever may be said of the progress of nobility, we cannot say the same

same of its beginnings ; for had not the first of any family, that is now noble, a father that was not so ? By what means could he change the blood of his grandfather ? Or how can he communicate other inclinations, or other natural powers to his children, than what he received from his forefathers !

Thus some nobles lay an imaginary claim to virtue ; thus we often see a title without possession, and that it is not nature but their vanity that lifts them up so much above others. Nay, to examine the lives of some, it seems, as if to be noble was nothing else but to be ignorant with less shame, and vicious with more boldness and impunity.

Yet on the other hand, we must own, that whatever evil attends nobility by inheritance, it is not because it is bad in itself, but because it is abused ; nobility is a character of great advantage, it leads us so forcibly to what is good that it seems, as it were, a natural virtue. How is it possible then for women of an illustrious birth not to be subject to virtue, since they have a natural inclination thereto, the benefit of a proper education from their parents, and the bright example of their ancestors ? Experience frequently shews, that the noble are more generous in time of danger, more polite in conversation, and more adroit in whatever they undertake ; so that even the countenance of several shews a more than ordinary greatness of soul.

But

But to conclude with what is of the greater moment in this respect ; women of high birth should endeavour to join the nobility of virtue with that of inheritance ; as merit can render those illustrious who are but of mean extraction, vice will make those infamous that are of the best of families. The counsel of saint *Jerom* to *Celantia* is worthy the observation of the whole sex : “ *We ought, says he, to esteem that nobility which pleaseth God, which depends upon ourselves, and is inseparable from virtue*”. There are three sorts of nobility, divine, worldly, and moral ; the divine relates to the heavenly origin of the soul, the worldly to ancestry and the genealogy of families, the moral only to virtue, which we ought to have in order to gain true esteem : The divine depends upon the power of God, the worldly upon the greatness of our birth, the moral upon the liberty of our mind ; if we consider well the importance of the first, we shall set less value upon the second, and render ourselves more capable of the third.

Lastly, As our ancestors wore moons on their shoes \* as marks of their nobility, I cannot give a better example here than that in holy writ †, where it is said ; *And there appeared a woman clothed with the sun ; upon her head was a crown of stars, and the moon under her feet.* To re-

\* This custom was observ'd by the noblest senators of *Rome*. See the reason of it in *Plutarch* on *Roman* questions.

† *Rev. xii. 1.*



Emble this vision, women should contemn that which most of them adore; they must throw under foot the sparkling vanities that many carry in their head, and seek the whole splendor of their nobility in being illumin'd by the grace of God, and crown'd with virtue.



C H A P. III.

*Of AMBITION compared with LOVE.*

**A**S reason seems the mother of love, ambition sometimes seems the mother of virtue; as ambition is a bad cause which yet may have good effects, love is sometimes a bad effect from a good cause; these two passions have a fair appearance, but are hazardous in their progress, and have oftentimes a tragical end: On the bad part they act differently, either by union or division, as the one sometimes attacheth us to that which is worthy our hate, and the other separates us from that which is worthy our regard. If in loving we offend against reason by an unworthy alliance, in affecting dominion we violate even the laws of nature, in renouncing and contemning what she holds most dear and sacred.

Love and ambition full often carry women to the utmost extremities; if they can defend themselves from the tyranny of these two passions, they will certainly find the means of living

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ing with less inquietude and more solid comfort. The ambitious and the amorous can never enjoy a quiet mind ; these two passions are the tyrants of life ; love begins, and ambition finishes it ; the one is never free from desires, nor the other without anxious hope : The more to abuse us, they are continually presenting us with some new appearances, either of grandeur or pleasure ; and to keep us still in heart, they always promise us more than they give. We will now examine which of the two is attended with the worse consequences to the fair sex.

It seems at first as if ambition had more influence on women than love, because a desire of exalting themselves is more natural than that of subjection ; ambition promises thrones of grandeur, but love presents only a servile yoke ; the one offers us sceptres, the other chains. Love demands our liberty from us, ambition promiseth that of others ; and however powerful love may be, upon a thorough examination we shall find that whatever strength it hath, it borrows it from ambition ; it is this which lighteth up his torch ; it is this that raises their spirits, and animates them to great designs and the most noble enterprises. He that would take away ambition from love, deprives him of his wings ; it seems these two passions have need of each other for their mutual support ; love softens ambition, and ambition fires love ; without love ambition could have neither sweetness

nor repose, without ambition love could have neither strength nor courage.

And indeed if love was exempt from ambition, would it not be also free from jealousy? It is the same ambition which causeth, that as we cannot bear an equal in power we cannot bear a rival in love. Moreover ambition heightens love, according to the opposition or difficulty it meets with in its pursuits. *Cato* \* thought no more of loving his wife, after he had divorc'd her; he look'd upon her rather as a friend than a wife. *Messalina* was grievously vexed that *Claudius* was not jealous of her; she desired rather to inspire him with fear than love; she had rather he should esteem her beauty than her fidelity †. Many like her despise the pleasures they can too easily enjoy; where they stand not upon a point of honour, they soon fall into disgust and inconsistency; this is a vanity too common to love, to wish that many should endeavour after what itself would wholly enjoy alone. Let us examine farther into this matter; jealousy comes not less from ambition than from love; as one is the father, the other is the mother of it. Love aspires to monarchy as well as ambition; envy regards the fortune, jealousy

\* *Cato of Utica*: He had three wives, *Servilia*, *Attilia*, and *Martia*, and was unhappy in them all. I take *Attilia* to be the wife here mention'd. See his life in *Plutarch*.

† *Tacit. Annal. xii.*

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the affection ; if they differ in their effects, **they** differ not in their nature and origin ; the **one** fears to have the numbers of its subjects diminished, the other fears to have them increased. Indeed it seems to be the same passion, but **to** have different objects ; jealousy hath respect **to** pleasure, envy to glory. And what difference is there in saying, that envy is a jealousy **with** regard to fortune, or that jealousy is envy **with** regard to love ? In short envy is an ambition, which cannot endure a companion in dominion ; jealousy is an ambition, which cannot endure one in love ; from hence it is manifest that ambition makes love more sensible, jealous, active, and courageous ; and that they who prove the power of love, prove at the same time that of ambition, since it is this which encourageth the lover to surmount all difficulties, and to pass by no injury without resentment and revenge.

But further, to give a stronger reason why it is more difficult to cure ambition than love ; as this passion is more pure, it is also more strong and lasting ; it does not confine itself to nature, it depends not on the vigor of the constitution ; it is more spiritual than love, it is not therefore to be cured or lowered by bleeding or sickness. As it is attached to the soul it seems to borrow somewhat of its immortality ; it is sometimes more strong when the senses are weaker ; indeed ambition seems the passion of angels, love  
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that of men; love seems the malady of the body, ambition that of the mind.

> Hence arises the difficulty of finding a proper remedy, so that they who are infected with it cannot cast it off before death; and therefore we may sooner hope to find an end of love than of ambition, because love may by chance meet with some satisfaction, but ambition never any. Love may die by satiety, ambition still thrives by hunger; the desire always exceeds possession; one object may content the former, but not the whole world the latter. In short love may sometimes find rest, but ambition labours without ceasing; enjoyment irritates this passion; its object, when thought within reach, steals away; it cannot quench its thirst any more than *Tantalus*; it cannot taste what it hath got, because the desire of glory to come hinders it from being satisfied with the present.

Thus then ambition is the more powerful, because it is the more spiritual; and likewise more difficult to be guarded against than love, because it is more subtle; but granting it were more possible to cure it, we seldom are willing; it is a passion that pleaseth us, its tyranny is agreeable, and there are more who complain of love than of ambition; a principal cause of this I think is, that pleasure has a certain apprehension of shame, which glory hath not. Ambition seeks the public stage, love rather chooseth

darkness; pleasure hides itself, glory cannot expose itself too much; this covets witnesses, and that shuns them. After all, we must not be surpris'd, that this passion hath so great influence on the mind of several women; and that they are less industrious to conceal their designs when they are possess'd with vanity, than when they indulge an affection: As modesty seems inseparable from their sex, there is no sort of crime they endeavour to avoid more than such as would bring them to shame; and for this reason they sooner yield to ambition than love.

But further, in order to shew to what extremities ambition carries them, we will confirm the former reasons by some examples; this is a very important point; indeed there is no design so black, which ambition scruples to conceive; there is no attempt so sacrilegious that it does not inspire, nor any thing so sacred that it dares not to profane. What crime is there, which an ambitious woman scorns to perpetrate? She is blind, inconstant, perfidious, cruel; she employs poison, sword, and even the magic arts.

*Medea* did much for love, but still more for ambition; love oblig'd her to leave all her relations to follow *Jason*; but ambition made her abandon *Jason* himself for the sake of revenge. Love made her blind, ambition taught her magic\*. Love is not transported but with sweetness; it is ambition which makes her furious,

\* Eurip. *Medea*. Ovid. *Epist. Met.* lib. vii. ver. 1. and

and puts her upon the execution of such horrid deeds; without this, love would be as a smooth and calm sea; it is this passion that stirs it, and works up storm and tempest.

There is nothing that makes women more cruel than ambition; when the ambitious think themselves injur'd, there is no room to expect pardon or pity; tho' *Orpheus* charm'd the woods and rocks, he could not calm the women whom ambition had made furious; and that excellent musician, who had prevail'd upon the infernals themselves by the sweetness of his song, was torn to pieces by the hands of the *Bacchanals* \*. When they are fired with this passion, there is nothing so just and perfect that they would not attempt its ruin; *Maisters*, says an eminent author, *preserve the prophets; but women, transported with ambition and revenge, put them to death*. A whale preserv'd *Jonas* †, and *Jesabel* persecuted *Elijah* ‡; *Daniel* is safe among lions §, and saint *John* the baptist is condemn'd at the request of an ambitious *Courtesan* \*\*.

Yet more, the ambitious spill not only the blood of others but their own; in sacred history we read that *Atbaliah* slew her children, that herself might reign ††; and in profane history, that

\* Virg. Georg. lib. iv. ver. 521.

† Jonah i. 17. Matth. xii. 39.

‡ 1 Kings xix. 2.

§ Dan. vi. 18.

\*\* Matth. xiv. 10.

†† 2 Kings xi. 1.

*Agrippina* \* suffer'd her children to slay her, that they might reign themselves : Such strange power hath ambition on the spirit of some women, either in doing evil, or suffering it ; it is either a martyr or a murderer ; it is alike wicked and miserable : After this we may justly say, that ambition is a mighty spoiler, and that nothing seems inviolable to this monster.

But let us turn the medal, and having seen the effects of ambition upon the mind of some women, let us now examine the effects of love ; and indeed, if ambition breaks through every law to reach the object of its desire, we may say the same of love. Love is altogether as bold as ambition, and, I think, seldom more just ; *Scylla* betray'd her parents and her country for the love of *Minos* † ; *Ariadne* did as much for *Theseus* ‡. They say that *Psyche* descended to the shades below, and to recover what she had lost, triumph'd over three goddesses ; *Byblis* fell in love with her brother §, and *Myrrha* with her Father. There are many examples of this irregular passion in true history without the fabulous ; experience shews us but too often how far love will carry women either in doing good or evil in a good or bad cause.

\* The mother of Nero. Tacit. Annal. 14.

† Ovid. Met. lib. viii. ver. 91.

‡ Ovid. Epist. Met. lib. viii. ver. 172. *Plutarch's* life of *Theseus*.

§ Ovid. Met. lib. ix. ver. 454.



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What is there it will not do, or undertake? There is nothing so difficult it cannot surmount either by courage or address; there is nothing so sacred it will not strive to corrupt; no crime so hainous it will not advise; and, to appeal to one of sufficient experience, had not the woman of *Samaria* good reason to say publicly, that he who had rebuked her for this passion *had told her all things that ever she did* \*? To mention profane love, is to say every thing; it is to make an abridgment of all kinds of evil.

Whatever may be said of ambition, love is still more powerful; it is that among the passions which is the *primum mobile* of the heavens; it gives motion to all the rest; and to philosophy aright, all the passions seem but the effect of love; it is this that fears, hopes, desires, laughs with joy, mourns with sorrow, and languishes with despair; it hath great influence therefore on our mind, and is a malady which is the source and cause of all other.

The soul depends on love, love on the object, and the object on our choice; but, as we are entirely free before love hath taken possession of us, when in his power we become as intirely slaves. Love depends at first upon our liberty, but after choice we depend altogether upon his tyranny; the great misfortune is, that his empire seems sweet, and so enchanting that

\* John iv. 29.

we can scarce ever complain of hardship. Love therefore more absolutely engages the mind than ambition; since whatever natural inclination we have to exalt ourselves, love will still humble us; and we may judge of his superior power, when he makes us prefer his chains to the scepters of ambition.

Love also must needs be more powerful than ambition, as it changes the desire of command into that of obedience; ambition yields to love, and there have been princes that had rather serve a beauty than command provinces and kingdoms. If ambition made *Phaeton* \* mount from earth to heaven, love made *Apollo* descend from heaven to earth; and as the poets feign'd that ambition hath raised even men above their natural strength, they likewise say that love hath debased the gods themselves below their dignity.

Is it not as great a miracle to see greatness humbled, as to see meanness exalted? Herein love seems not less just than powerful, and its empire more supportable than that of ambition; because if love wou'd reign, it will also obey; if it demands submission, it will likewise pay it; love is a mutual empire of persons, who command together and together serve.

And to say that ambition must be more powerful, because it is more pure, and that it is more attached to the mind, as love is rather

\* Ovid. Met. lib. i. ver. 752.

to the will and senses ; this reason seems as weak to me, as others think it strong ; this shews, that as the will is the mistress of the faculties, love which depends thereon is queen of the passions ; and it is easy to prove this ; we become masters of an object by knowledge, but by love we become its slaves. The mind abstracts to itself what it knows, the will gives itself up to what it loves ; so that if the object enters the mind in order to be known, the will hazards itself in love. See we not plainly therefore that it is more difficult to make us go, as it were, from ourselves to love an object, than to take it to ourselves in order to know it ; and that the object of ambition cannot harm us so much as that of love, because ambition is mistress of that which it possesseth, and the will a captive to what it loves.

But more clearly, since ambition is attached to the mind, we may easily enough judge from hence that it is weaker than love ; because it infects the mind only, whereas love attacks both the mind and the senses : Love is often victorious over two parties at the same time, ambition but over one ; as it is easier to defend ourselves against an opinion than a fever, it is easier to cure ambition than love ; to resist ambition we have but one enemy to conquer, to oppose love we have two ; we must not say therefore that love is the weaker because it depends upon the body ; and that as it is more

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material, it is more capable of diminution or cure; because it rages in the veins, does not the soul feel it? On the contrary, it is this that makes it the more powerful, the senses being gain'd by this passion, they are continually pestering reason with the idea of the objects that please them.

Besides, to judge rightly of these two passions, ambition is not more spiritual but more imaginary. Love can separate itself from matter so well as ambition; it is the mind that loves beauty, as well as desires dominion; and if the senses sometimes take part in its designs, they are but the infamous servants that accept what their masters refuse\*; as among the elements there are none more pure than fire, among the passions there is none more pure than love; it is more subtile as it is more strong. I am not speaking of this passion as it is in its abuse, but as it is really in its own nature. There is no doubt then but that love is very powerful over the minds of many, and that it is of great moment to know the means of preservation, when it is contrary to reason.

Having given therefore a description of this disease let us now look out for a remedy; tho' I pretend not infallibly to cure an evil, which so many have thought incurable; yet to this purpose nothing can serve better than to do by prudence what *Psyche* did by chance; I mean,

\* Alluding to the story of Gehazi, 2 Kings v. 20.

to light up the lamp that will at least discover what is shameful and ridiculous in this passion. Reason gives it birth, but it also puts an end to it ; it may be the mother and yet the destroyer of it ; it may be its cradle and its tomb. Love is born in light, but lives in darkness ; reason, having conceiv'd it by means of knowledge, may likewise thereupon treat it with scorn and contempt.

If we consider'd well the end of love, we should be more afraid of its beginning ; and we should not be so fond of imbarking on this sea, if we consider'd the shelves and frequent wrecks that are therein. The getting out of this labyrinth is as difficult as the entrance is easy ; so that there is no better remedy to cure this passion than to observe the miscarriages and miseries that oftentimes attend it. Since profane love, in the opinion of saint *Jerom*, is *nothing else but the forgetfulness of reason*, and that in fact, there is no such salutary antidote to love as wisdom, we must employ in our defence all the knowledge and light we have, in considering how much care and inquietude it brings upon us, how it effeminates the heart, how many torments it involves us in, and in what strange enterprises it makes us oftentimes engage.

*Crates* \* said of lovers, *that if time and fasting could not conquer this passion, there was no*

\* A philosopher of *Thebes*. Plutarch. *Sympos. lib. ii.*

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*other remedy but death* ; but herein he spoke neither as a physician nor a philosopher. *This* is strange counsel indeed ; this is not the sentiment of a wife but of a desperate man ; to banish love, there is no need to take away life, but error only ; and indeed this is one of the most powerful remedies that are ; and herein the maladies of the soul are altogether different from those of the body. We may sometimes cure maladies of the body by diversion, and on the contrary those of the soul by attention. We are apt to say to those that are in pain, *Don't think of it* ; but we may say to those whom love hath blinded, *Think well of it*. In thinking on the wounds of the body we sometimes increase the pain ; but by reflecting on the follies of the mind, we are induc'd to apply a remedy.

Nevertheless we must own, that love may be without offence ; as in every heat there is not a fever, every sort of love is not attended with bad consequences ; it is not always reason's enemy, it may be a virtue as well as a passion. In a word, there is nothing so good or so bad as love, but the right use or abuse thereof depends upon our liberty ; as we paint it an infant, we must lead it lest it should lose itself ; it is a malicious blind boy who endeavours nothing more than to hood-wink his guide, that they may both lose their way together.


As for ambition it requires a different method of cure, because to condemn the forbidden pleasures

pleasures that love presents, we must think them unworthy of us ; and to shun the glory that ambition promiseth, we must think ourselves unworthy of it. To guard ourselves against the power of love, we must have respect to the dignity of our nature ; to guard ourselves against the temptations of ambition, we must consider our weakness ; to yield to love, is too much to debase ourselves ; to yield to ambition, is too much to exalt ourselves. If pleasure is too much below us ; grandeur and glory are as much above us.



#### C H A P. IV.

##### *Of MARRIAGE and CELIBACY.*

 CELIBACY declines not the delights of life, but refines them ; it changes those that are gross into those that are spiritual and more solid ; so that to prefer a single state to marriage for the tranquillity and salvation of the soul, is to change a bed of thorns for a bed of roses ; it is to quit labour for the enjoyment of rest.

Not that I would blame marriage, which our Lord himself approved of by his presence, by his benediction, and miracles. His birth did honour to the marriage-state as well as to virginity ; tho' he permits the one, he adviseth the other

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other. I do not say that it is bad, but sometimes very unhappy ; according to the use or abuse of it there is nothing worse or better ; it is the hell or the paradise of this world.

Ingenuously to recount the evils of it ; what pleasure can there be with a coquette, who will live rather according to her own humour than according to reason ; and who would fain revive the old custom of *Sparta*, where the women had the mastery over their husbands \* ? What contentment can there be in living with the querulous and peevish, who are continually grumbling, and scarce ever in a good-humour or with a smiling countenance ? What satisfaction in an hypocrite who flatters not but to deceive, who frequents the sacred places only by way of blind, and to render her the less suspected of going where she ought not, and appears good the more conveniently to do evil. Lastly, what advantage is it to be united with the crafty and perfidious, who will have a thousand inventions and cabals to carry on her vile intrigues ; who will dishonour you be you ever so innocent, and with whom not only reputation is in danger but life itself ? But to judge of this from an example well known to all the world, was it not *Eve* that seduced *Adam* to sin, who deprived him of his innocence and happiness, who made him at the same time guilty and miserable ?

\* See *Plutarch*, in the life of *Lycurgus*.

But



But if men have just reason to complain herein, women have likewise too often the same; whatever evil there may be in the marriage-state, women generally bear the greater share of it, because it is less troublesome to command a bad disposition than to obey it. Custom deprives them of the right of self-defence; and whatever tyranny they are subject to they must bear it, while the others are pleas'd to exercise it upon them.

And indeed what greater martyrdom can be conceiv'd than for a woman to be constrained to pass her life with a man that hath neither generosity nor probity; who will confine her like a slave to satisfy an unjust suspicion, and act rather as a spy than an husband; who will not permit her either the conversation of honest men, or the reading good books; who will be jealous of her, if handsome; and have an aversion for her, if homely? Indeed we too often see the marriage of an *Abigail* with a *Nabal*\*, I mean, of an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN with a churlish brute.

But you will say, however this be there is no reason to complain, because marriage depends upon our own choice and liberty; indeed tho' we may sometimes attribute disgrace to our own imprudence, yet we must own there is always great hazard in this affair however good the intentions. Fortune hath generally greater share

\* 1 Sam. xxv.

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in it than conduct; what seems good may not prove so, and what really is so may not be lasting. Appearance may deceive us at present, and a change may happen; men may not always persevere in truth. As they that now enjoy their health may be taken with some incurable disease, so they who entertain good sentiments to-day may fall into errors that are remediless.

We sometimes therefore see marriages that are fair and happy in their beginning, grievous in their progress and tragical in their end; it is a short storm that glares with a flash and makes a great noise for a while, but at last dissolves in showers; it is a slight pleasure that ends in long and bitter distaste, but supposing this not to happen, nor any change of temper, time itself insensibly brings on an alteration; this violent passion gradually abates of itself without our contributing thereto; pleasure is a libertine, that takes offence at marriage for no other reason than because it is in bondage.

After all, do what we will there are so many requisites to make the marriage-state truly happy, that it is almost impossible to meet with an assemblage of them together. *Theophrastus* required that the wife should be fair, good, and noble, and the husband, healthy, rich, and wise. If the happiness of marriage therefore depends upon these three qualifications on each side, no wonder that it so often fails. As for women, we sometimes find beauty with a bad heart, and deformity with

with goodness, either virtue with low extraction, or vice with high birth : And as for men, it is to be feared that poverty is often joined with merit, or great defaults with wealth. There would be no end of examining into all the conditions that are necessary to render the marriage-state happy ; let it suffice to acknowledge, that whatever prudence may be used there is some danger in making a bad choice, chiefly on this account, that when it should prove so, the evil is remediless and repentance unprofitable.

But be this as it will, suppose a person should make as happy a choice as can be, and both the parties well satisfied with each other, yet marriage is a sort of let or hindrance, particularly to the most heroic virtues ; because it is as a counterpoise that weighs us down, and keeps us from rising to any eminent degree of perfection : The women who have aspired to make themselves famous in any great point, have always made profession of a single life.

To consider those that have excelled in the arts and sciences, as the Muses ; or in conquests, as the Amazons, or in prophesy, as the Sibyls ; or in virtue and religion, as the Vestals ; did they not all decline the embarrassment of marriage, as a fashion of life which in great measure would diminish the liberty that is necessary for eminent virtues and generous enterprises ? They knew that this effeminates the courage of conquerors and disturbs the meditation

tation of philosophers; that there is no reason to think that any one would hazard a life on which so many other persons depend; or that any one can study as he ought amidst the noise and cares of a family: They know that marriage hinders us either from living without inquietude, or dying without regret.

Thus we see the inconveniences that attend the marriage-state, let us now consider what may be found pleasant, useful and commendable therein. I intend not to shew how necessary it is to all the world, as it serves for a remedy to our weakness, and to preserve the name of our ancestors to latest posterity; as it is holy in its first institution, tho' sometimes profaned in practice; as it is the foundation of all commerce, and the strongest tye of all alliances; seeing that the first society is between man and wife, the second between children and parents, and the third between friends and citizens: And as there are no true families without marriage, there are no cities without families, nor provinces without cities. I intend not, I say, to shew these great and fair effects of marriage, however agreeable they are and necessary to life; I shall not enter upon a subject which seems not only too ample, but is indeed foreign to my subject and design.

I shall only endeavour to shew, that marriage is not contrary to the quiet of life, nor to the practice of the most heroic virtues. Some great personages

personages indeed have been of another opinion ; *Pythagoras*, having bestow'd his daughter in marriage to one of his greatest enemies, gave this strange reason for his so doing ; "*I could not*, says he, *do him a greater mischief, nor present him with any thing worse than a wife.*" *Socrates* told his friends, that *having three great evils to encounter*, grammar, poverty, and a wife, *study had delivered him from the first, good fortune from the second, but that marriage had for ever bound him to the third.* *Cicero* having divorced his wife, said to those who advised him to take another, "*that it was impossible for a man to marry a wife and philosophy both together* \*."

Thus some have decried marriage ; but we will use these very examples to shew that their opinion is more injurious than true. Did marriage hinder *Cicero* from being the greatest Orator of the age ? *Pythagoras* from applying himself to philosophy, or *Socrates* to virtue ? Did *Solon* †, when he married, renounce his study and strict morals ? Or was he upon this account more wretched or less wise ? Marriage by no means diverts us from generous undertakings, but rather animates us to great actions, that may serve for examples and an honour to our posterity.

One good action is sufficient to enoble a whole race, and *Epaminondas* ‡ had reason to say that

\* *Plutarch* in the life of *Cicero*.

† One of the seven wise men of *Greece*.

‡ The *Theban* general. See his life in *Cornelius Nepos*.

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*he could not leave a better legacy to his successors than his conquest of the Leuctri.* To maintain a family makes not a man timorous but considerate; it restrains not fortitude, but only rashness; for we cannot but own that a careful concern must provoke and encourage us, when we take for our spectators a wife and family, who must blush at our ill-doing, and partake of our glory or our shame. When fathers take so much pains to heap up wealth for their children, why shou'd they not have the same care to acquire glory for them? And why should not this care for their posterity make them as well courageous as covetous?

And to say that at least marriage hath its thorns, and that it in some measure disturbs the peace of the soul, in truth this opinion is not more reasonable than the former. Marriage is not a persecution, but a comfort; if we must renounce it, because it hath sometimes proved unhappy, we may as well quit life because it may be unhealthy. Can there be a greater satisfaction in life than to have a faithful person to whom we may freely discover every joy and every sorrow, and with whom we may intrust every private thought with an intire confidence?

And where shall we find this advantage more complete, than among those that are united by the strongest tie and the most sacred alliance? Surely this must increase the good and lessen the  
evil

evil of life. Amity, as all the world confess, makes the greatest part of our felicity ; without this there is nothing agreeable in society ; without this, glory and riches are but a burden, and pleasure itself hath no relish : And where can this be found so perfect ? where so fraught with the most pure delights as in the marriage-state ? To see this plainer, we need only consider the three principal effects of amity, conversation, community, and resemblance ; for what conversation can be more free and familiar than that between two persons who have oblig'd themselves never to part ? What community more complete than that of marriage, where one party can engage and fix the other ? And what so great resemblance or conformity of affections can there be, as between two persons who ought to have the same heart and the same soul ?

This is very clear ; but to come to what more particularly concerns the fair sex, we must not only conclude from what has been said that marriage may be happy, but consider also the means of making it so. Women should learn herein that to make their conversation more agreeable, and to evidence a more perfect amity, they ought above all things to have due regard to these two qualities, fidelity, and sweetness of temper. In truth the happiness or misery of marriage almost always depends upon their conduct ; if they had as true an affection as they ought to have, they would have more  
address

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address and more patience when there is need of it. They seldom can discover really what they are but in the time of affliction; it is then they shew their virtue and their love.

When *Pompey*, after being vanquish'd by *Julius Caesar*, went to visit his wife *Cornelia* in the isle of *Lesbos*, she no sooner saw him than she fell down in a swoon and hurt herself greatly; but when she came to herself she complained of nothing else, but that the fall of *Pompey* had hurt her more than the fall of *Cornelia* \*. Thus it is, that good wives interest themselves in the afflictions of their husbands; and this is what gives infinite comfort to the most wretched, when they see another bear so affectionate a part in that they suffer.

*Erasmus* admir'd the affection and courage of *Thebea*, when her husband *Philoxenus* was accused of a conspiracy against *Dionysius* the tyrant whose sister she was; he came to her and reproached her for having done wrong in betraying a brother to save so worthless an husband; and that she ought not to have suffer'd *Philoxenus* to fly, when he had discover'd to her so black an attempt.

" *Why should you think, says she, that an interest of an husband should not concern me more than that of a brother? Have I so little resolution or affection, that if he had told me*

\* She was the daughter of *Metellus Scipio*. *Plutarch* in the life of *Pompey*.

" his



“ *his design, I should have suffer'd him to go*  
 “ *away without me? Assure yourself that a wife*  
 “ *only languishes here in pain when her husband*  
 “ *is absent, and that Thesea always thought*  
 “ *herself more happy, whatever her condition, to*  
 “ *be called the wife of Philoxenus than the sister*  
 “ *of a tyrant\*.*”

I own these examples are great, but I find none like to *Arria* the wife of *Patus*; who, when her husband, tho' under sentence of death yet afraid to die, had not courage enough to be his own executioner, took his poniard, and having plunged it in her bosom drew it out and presented it to him, saying, “ *Do as I have done, and know that the wound I have given myself pains me not, like that which you must soon feel†.*” This is the voice and sentiment of a virtuous woman, who is more concern'd for the pains of her husband than her own; yet how many are far from this perfection, and are more like the wife of *Job* who reproached her husband in his afflictions, who accused him of stupidity instead of exhorting him to patience, and indeed hurt him more than the devil himself.

Having seen how women ought to testify their constancy and fidelity to their husbands

\* Vide Pausanias in Attic. *Ælian.* xii. 47. Casaubon in *Athenæum* iv. 11.

† Mart. *Epigr. lib.* xiv. Tac. *Ann.* 14. Plin. *Epist. lib.* iii. 16.

under the severest misfortunes, let us now consider with what sweetness they ought to behave in common conversation. This excellent quality is not less important than the other, to make the marriage-state agreeable and happy. Whatever perfection a woman may have, without due complaisance and sweetness of temper, her virtue itself may become troublesome, and her ill-humour render her whole carriage disagreeable.

I would not however have them use too much artifice and affectation herein, as some women do, and hereby make their husbands rather mad than kind; to use I know not what poisonous charms is to destroy them instead of winning them; it is an honest and just design indeed for a woman to make herself as amiable as possible in the eyes of her husband; but she must take care not to employ forbidden means, tho' it be to gain a commendable end.

But setting aside such abuses, there is nothing that a woman ought not to do to maintain sweetness and amity. "*Venus*, says a great writer, must  
 " be accompanied in marriage with the Muses,  
 " Mercury, and the Graces; with the Muses, for  
 " the diversion of decent entertainment; with Mer-  
 " cury, for the persuasive encouragement to virtue;  
 " and with the Graces, to keep up in their con-  
 " versation that sweetness of temper and engag-  
 " ing complaisance which is the soul of amity,  
 " as amity is the soul of marriage." And in-  
 deed

deed without this the conversation of the most virtuous is not altogether agreeable. *Livia* the wife of *Augustus* used to say, that in humouring the inclinations of her husband she became intirely his mistress; that the way to command is to obey, and that in this alone women display their kindness and affection\*.

And indeed as we esteem not a mirror that gives a false reflexion, tho' it be enriched with pearls and set round with diamonds; so whatever merit and perfection a woman has, the chief good is yet wanting, if she has not sweetness of temper and a tractable disposition to please her husband. *Plutarch*† therefore justly compares an obedient wife to a glass that is true; for what can be more complaisant than such a glass? If you speak, the image therein moves its lips; if you grow pale, that likewise changes colour; if you go away, it disappears; it is nothing else but your very self. Perhaps it may seem too rigorous, to expect a woman should be altogether as conformable to an husband; yet if we consider it well, this would not seem so difficult a task: For as the glass is not broken or otherwise damag'd by the image seen therein, so truly a good-humour'd person is not at all injur'd by condescending to the inclinations of another. I say further, that as he who breaks a glass into several pieces still sees

\* Tac. Annal. 1. Suetonius.

† In his conjugal Precepts, §. 12.

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his image separately in every part; so there have been women so virtuous and so very obedient, that even when their husbands have given them offence, have still honour'd them, and endeavour'd what lay in their power to please them by their condescension and sweet behaviour.

They say indeed that such an happy temper is rarely to be found; and that there are more who are like the wife of *Tobit* \* than the wife of *Abraham*; be that as it will, I say not with *Philoxenus*, what they are; but with *Sophocles*, what they ought to be. I must freely own, that I can never approve of those women who take upon them to disturb a family, like *Xantippè* † the wife of *Socrates*, and who delight in nothing more than disorder and confusion. They will not always meet with philosophers like him; there may be those who will correct their ill humour somewhat more roughly, and will not make use of a civil lecture to appease their fury. But how terrible is such conversation! surely *Alphonsus* was right, in saying that *to make the marriage-state happy, the husband must be deaf and the wife blind*; if women ought sometimes to shut their eyes upon the actions of their husbands for fear of being jealous, the men are oblig'd sometimes to stop their ears against the clamour and reproaches of their wives.

\* *Tobit* i. 14. ii. 1. x. 7.

† See *Plutarch* on profit from enemies.


But

But after all, I mean not hereby that the men should become tyrants, or that the obedience of their wives should make them insolent; *devoir* must be reciprocal; if it be not reciprocal, it is imperfect and even unjust. The manner of creating the first woman testifieth this; she was not taken from the feet or from the head but from the side, to shew that she was design'd not for a slave or mistress, but for an agreeable companion.



C H A P. V.

OF TRUE *and* FALSE PROBITY.

 HERE is nothing so pernicious as false probity; it teaches hypocrisy in devotion, treachery in friendship, and perfidiousness in all manner of conversation. Women have sometimes been accused of having an inclination thereto, as if they knew how to mask their actions as well as their faces, and could paint goodness as well as beauty; but indeed if there have been some such dissemblers, others surely have been sincerely honest; and experience sufficiently shews, that their natural disposition is as capable of an honest simplicity as of artifice and cunning. Be this as it will; their innocence stands not in need of any apology from me; and I think it will be enough, in order to make this discourse useful,

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to shew the marks of false probity, and to point out some remedies that they may know the means of discovering it in others, and correcting it in themselves, and learn, not to deceive, nor to be deceiv'd.

But indeed as important as this is, it is a **very** difficult lesson; because there are those **who** carry such an appearance of goodness, that it would be thought a crime to have the least suspicion of their virtue, and yet it sometimes so happens, that they have the heart of a Fury under the countenance of a Siren, the face of a *Lucretia* and the life of a *Messalina*, the manners of a prostitute under the mien of a saint. This then is one of the most visible marks of false probity; because there is no doubt but that it always affects a more glaring appearance than true probity; we may say the same of false virtue, that we did of false friendship; that by making so great an éclat and using so much affectation, they both alike become suspected by every honest man.

The sentiment of *Aristotle* seems admirable, when he says, that *we may know false probity as we do false money; as the gold that glitters most is not the best, the actions that make the most shew of goodness are not always the most virtuous.*

As the devil, the patron and example of all hypocrites, transforms himself to an angel of light, such his disciples do the same, often borrowing the visage of virtue to gain reception for vice; they

they desire to make their appearance in all public places ; they can do nothing without witnesses ; when they pray, they are loud ; what alms they give, they give *openly in the streets* ; and when they fast, they are *of a sad countenance and disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast* \* : In short, all such are mere players, who study to appear what they are not ; had they no spectators, we may suppose they would not look and act so cautiously as on a stage.

False probity knows the most refined and subtle part in devotion, it is learned and eloquent, it hath many mouths but no hands, it can speak well but does not practise ; it teaches the means of salvation, but walks in the way of perdition ; it touches the cross, but will not carry it ; it makes bitter cries, and yet is not penitent. In short, all this grand appearance is only the sign of falshood ; bad designs stand in need of the fairest mask. The *Trojan* horse, big with enemies, was dedicated to the goddess *Minerva* † : And that infamous queen ‡, of whom the scripture speaks, commanded her people to keep a fast when she designed to commit murder.

But in order to discover this dissimulation we must observe, that as false probity sheweth ex-

\* Matt. vi. 2, 16.

† Virg. *Æn.* ii. 230.

‡ Jezabel 1 Kings xxi. 9.

cess in embracing virtue, it likewise does the same in shunning vice ; it counterfeits both love and hatred ; it will appear scrupulous, but it is only outward while it harbours a licentious soul. *Plutarch* \* saith, that *as the soul of a libertine imagines there is no God, the scrupulous and precise wou'd fain have it so ; what the one thinks, the other desires ;* if this be so, what must we say of those who are intirely libertines within, and only scrupulous in appearance ; or rather who affect preciseness, only to take the greater liberties ?

Of what a different religion are their heart and face ! the one is a devotee, while the other is an atheist ; the one weeps, while the other jests ; they condemn others for a scratch, while their own will is guilty of a thousand murders. They are scrupulous of an honest freedom, and yet give themselves up to riot and excess ; without a witness they have neither dread of sin nor love of virtue. Women, who profess true probity, have I know not what more freedom in their behaviour ; their actions are less constrained and more genuine ; they appear truly what they are, whereas the other employ all their art and study to appear what they are not, or more than they are. I own, as I have said elsewhere, that some may be scrupulous through ignorance, as well as by design ; and that as these are to be blamed, the other are to

\* In his discourse on *superstition*.



be pitied : But there is a great deal of difference herein, because they who are so by simplicity are easy and well content to be told of their error ; whereas they who are so by design are altogether desperate when their hypocrisy is discover'd.

And here we may pass on to the third mark of false probity ; because they who are addicted thereto fear nothing more than to stand corrected, there is no difference between reproving and vexing an hypocrite ; as they who seek vain-glory love not reproof, they who love truth cannot hate it. False probity is humble, provided it be not rebuked ; it is patient, when not cross'd by any accident ; it is cowardly and proud ; it hath no more courage to bear a misfortune than modesty to bear a rebuke. This false money cannot bear the fire or the coppel ; it is not proof against either pain or truth. Nor is false probity more capable of giving reproof than of receiving it ; it is neither humble herein, nor charitable. This is the very touchstone whereby to know true from false virtue in women ; they who are really good love reproof when justly merited ; they who are so only in appearance, hate and despise it ; they are enemies to every thing that tends to take off the mask ; because they seek not instruction of the mind, but only the approbation of the world ; they prefer opinion to the rectitude of conscience.

## 54 *The Accomplish'd Woman.*

These then are the signs of false probity ; there are some other indeed, but these are the principal. Hypocrites are all outside ; they appear scrupulous and precise ; they cannot bear correction and reproof. There are also some who pretend they can discover the signs of a bad heart, or of goodness in the countenance ; and that, by understanding the rules of physiognomy, they want nothing more than the outward mien alone, to judge of truth from the appearance : And tho' the countenance, say they, may sometimes deceive, as in the case of *Socrates*, who was a man of the strictest integrity and honour, tho' his face spoke the contrary ; this is so very rare, that in general they conclude the countenance discovers somewhat of our passions, and the front is as it were the picture of the soul.

But having shewn the means of discovering this hypocritical dissimulation, let us come to something more important, the means of remedying the same. There is nothing better, in order to conceive horror at it, than to consider how unjust and dangerous false probity is ; that it is contrary to reason, to society, to courage, to virtue, to conscience. It is contrary to reason or the light of nature, because in proportion to what share of reason we have we ought to have the more sincerity ; and as the sun dissipates the dark shades of night, a good disposition will banish all disguise, and not trouble itself with so many vain artifices.

It

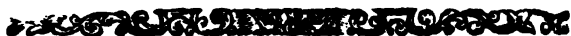
It is contrary to society and conversation, because by teaching never to appear what we are nor to speak what we think, it follows, that we must not expect fidelity in friendship, truth in discourse, nor security in the affairs of life. It is contrary to courage, because there is as much mean-spiritedness as supple cunning in all this constraint; this dissimulation is strangely bashful; it is contrary to virtue itself, because false probity taking upon itself the appearance of true, we cannot well discern the one from the other; and because it gives too light a recompense to virtue, feeding itself only with vain-glory, and seeking from the hands of men what is not to be receiv'd but from the hands of God.

Lastly, It is contrary to the repose of conscience, because we are at greater pains to put on an appearance than truth itself would cost; and to live in this manner, is properly going to the shades below by the way of paradise. Shameful blindness! of what use is it to have the approbation of the world, while remorse tyrannizeth within? What avails it to enjoy pleasures only in idea, and be tortur'd in reality? In short, of what service is it in the end for women to conceal their designs of vain-glory, under an head cover'd with dust and ashes? To shew a mortified countenance while the soul is puffed up with pride, and to be holy in the sight of men, but highly criminal in the sight of God? Let them feign what they will, they will always

at last find, that it is with a good conscience as with a good face, the one needs no paint, and the other no disguise.

After all, to strike a just terror into those who endeavour to disguise their actions, and who choose rather to appear virtuous than to be so, I think it is enough to mention the sole example of *Brunebault*, whom *Clotharius* condemn'd to be drawn at an horse's tail, and so torn in pieces, and punish'd in public view by a death very grievous and tragical. *Belle-Forest* says, that *this queen appear'd very devout in the eyes of many, and nevertheless with all this shew of piety, she was the cause of more deaths than an hundred battles; she affected; says he, the conversation of the most holy personages, and yet was so cruel as to kill her son and nephews; She founded so many monasteries that it is almost incredible, and yet took pleasure in fomenting treasons, and raising seditions among all her neighbours, nay in murdering the most innocent and just of her own kingdom.* Never was a woman so good in all appearance and so bad in fact; and therefore if we may credit what many have wrote of her, she was the true image of false probity. I know that *Æmilius* and others have justified this princess, and that they attribute all the evil that hath been said of her to the envy of those who will allow no merit to a foreigner; but whether she was really bad, or only unhappy I pretend not to determine; I have

have only said of her what I found in history\*.



CHAP. VI.

Of SOLITUDE and QUIETNESS  
of MIND.

**H**AVING shewn what women ought to be with regard to others, it is necessary to consider the duty they owe themselves; it is nothing to know what they must do to make their conversation agreeable, if they know not what is requisite to make their lives happy. Concerning this matter therefore we may say to them what an eminent person wrote to the emperor *Constantine*, that the two most desirable good things of life are a clear reputation and a sound conscience, because there is nothing that more generally makes life disagreeable than infamy and inquietude. Conscience depends intirely upon ourselves, reputation not so much; the former is founded on innocence and virtue, the latter very often on accidents. Reputation makes us happy among

\* She was the daughter of king *Athanasius*, and married *Sigebert I.* A. D. 568. and was the mother of *Chilbert II.* She is commended by *St. Gregory the great*, *St. Germain of Paris*, and others. She was executed A. D. 614. There are some verses on her death by *Ronsard*; but they are not worth recital.

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others, conscience makes us happy in ourselves ; our honour depends upon the opinion that others have of us, our tranquillity upon the opinion that we have of ourselves.

We may easily judge from hence of the importance of conscience, seeing that it either gives or deprives us of all true content, and that tho' we had ever so great reputation one single sting of conscience would make us wretched and disturb the tranquillity of the soul ; so that peace of mind depends intirely upon the purity of conscience. To the enjoying a tranquil soul there is nothing more requisite than innocence. And surely this is very just, because at least our felicity depends upon ourselves ; there is no person but may be content ; our happiness is attached to our liberty ; it is in our own power to make life easy or burdensom. How necessary therefore is it for women to enjoy this inward peace, or what point in morality can be of greater importance ? But to shew more plainly what can preserve or disturb this tranquillity, I cannot help thinking that as it is not easy long to enjoy health in a time of pestilence, so it is very difficult to be at rest amidst the noise and distraction of the world. It is almost impossible to be at ease in a croud ; as we seldom see the fruit of trees that grow by the way-side come to be ripe, because the people passing by not only gather it before the season, but pluck off the leaves and break the boughs, so it is difficult

cult to bring our intentions however good they are to perfection in the throng of the world, because there are so many occasions that trouble us, and so many objects to tempt our integrity. We conceive good things but bring them not forth; the best resolutions die in us without effect, and most of them are stifled in their birth. They that have been at a sermon will from thence go to a play; they are angels in the morning, and in the evening devils; it is very difficult either to be long virtuous or content; therefore there are a thousand accidents that either disturb or corrupt us.

I grant however that even in solitude there is danger, and that, in spite of ourselves, fancy will present the sight with unseemly objects, and solicit the mind with evil thoughts: I grant that even in flying from the world we may sometimes carry our passions along with us; but after all we must confess that our peril is not so great in solitude, nor are evil thoughts so frequent here or dangerous; they are just born, and live not; they are the flashes of vanity that appear and disappear in a moment; and when any reflexion importunes, it is much easier to throw it off here than amidst the press of the world. The picture of an enemy cannot hurt us like an enemy himself; here the world can only tempt us with the image of an object, but in company it presents the objects themselves. A painted sun scorseth us not like that in the heavens,  
nor

nor do we fear the venom of serpents **or** the point of a drawn sword in a picture. **It** is easier to defend ourselves from an evil that **is** a mere phantom than from a real one; the presence of our enemies affects us more than **their** shadow; on seeing a painted sea we are **not** terrified as at the wrecks we see floating on **the** ocean itself.

There is less peril therefore in solitude; there is less danger of being corrupted by the objects that please us, or troubled by those that please us not. But suppose that virtuous persons and such as are constantly inclined to good, may still preserve the purity of their conscience amidst the company of the world, yet at least they find it difficult to maintain a tranquil spirit; if they are not corrupted, they are however persecuted, nor without much pains can they gain a victory; if they escape shipwreck, they cannot help being tossed with the storm.

What uneasiness must they suffer in some companies! what patience must they have to bear the rudeness and impertinence of several they meet with! *Montagne*, I think, had good reason to say, that *was it put to his choice to be always alone or never, he would have chose to live always in solitude rather than always in company; because it is a less evil to renounce the conversation of some honest and good men, than to be incessantly disturbed with that of the impertinent and troublesome* \*.

\* *Essays*, lib. ii. chap. 8.



Be this as it will, we may justly call solitude a paradise, seeing that it inspires good thoughts ; it gives us rest and delight, and in some measure fits us for communion with God himself ; yet, as even this may be abused, I praise not all sorts of solitude. Of solitary persons some are barbarous, and some contemplative ; there is a solitude which ariseth from misanthropy, and is indeed brutal ; there is another sort which only seeketh rest to the soul, and this is divine ; this is the only one I am speaking of, it being that which greatly contributes to the tranquillity of the mind.

Besides, I freely own that it avails us nothing to estrange ourselves from company, if at the same time we forsake not our passions ; it avails nothing to live in the silence of the most retired groves, if fear or desires still disturb the soul ; and that it is not true solitude, however remote from any noise, if we are still pester'd with a croud of evil thoughts. It is not enough therefore for women to be all alone, to enjoy true solitude ; to have the mind at ease, there is no better way than to make themselves mistresses of their affections, instead of being slaves to them. Without this, let them fly company as they will they cannot fly from inquietude ; and let them think as they please, they can never enjoy at the same time a mind easy and passionate ; and yet it is shameful to see how few there are, that take the right method of living in  
tranquil-

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tranquillity ; there is nothing they desire more or seek less ; all the world wish to live at ease, yet scarce any one takes the way to arrive thereat.

Alas ! how many are there who discompose themselves with gaiety of heart, who trouble themselves with what concerns them not, who employ their will in many matters wherein they ought only to use their judgment ; who are altogether profuse in their desires, their cares and their pity ! I mean not by this, that to be without inquietude they must be without thought ; to be at rest is not to be without action, but without passion ; there is a great deal of difference between tranquillity and idleness : Neither do I desire, that to be without care they should be without charity ; I approve not of that tranquillity, in which neither religion nor reason bear a part.

There are extremes herein, which I hold to be vitious ; it would be both scandalous and criminal, if to be at ease we must be cruel or stupid ; there are but too many, as I have said elsewhere, whose ignorance is of service to them herein, and who would have less ease had they more knowledge. As the lower as well as the higher region of the air is free from tempests, and the middle region only subject to storms ; so I think they are the middle sort of minds, that find the greatest difficulty to enjoy a calm. Great minds are above affliction, little minds  
are

are below it; the one is ignorant of what the other surmounts. But indeed many are of such a disposition, as to employ it wholly in doing themselves harm; they are not subtle, but to make themselves more wretched; and if we examine well their imprudence, we shall find that they have no invention but what tends to disturb their own tranquillity: If they possess any good, they regard it not; if any evil happens to them, their whole attention is taken up with reflecting upon their misery; they retain the evil, but let the good escape them.

*Pausanias* very justly observ'd, that *there is nothing of more mischievous consequence to women than desire and fear*; and that *as they are naturally more inclin'd to these two passions, so there is nothing that gives them more uneasiness or oftner disturbs the quietness of their mind*: And indeed the most frequent cause of their inquietude is, that they seldom or never regard the better part in their condition, but only the worse; and on the other hand, in looking upon others they consider not wherein they are miserable, but only wherein they are happy; they see not their own good fortune, nor the bad of others. How does this error rack the soul of many? They that live apart from the great world are ambitious to converse with those about the court; on the contrary the courtiers, under their daily fatigue, think no life so happy as a country life. Envy sometimes casts down the eyes as well


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well as lifts them up; those of a middle fortune wish for the pomp of princesses, and these on the contrary would be glad to enjoy the sweet rest and tranquillity of peasants. Some complain that beauty subjects them to troublesome importunities, others that ugliness makes them despised; they either accuse fortune or nature; and thus it is, that by desiring what is good in the condition of others, they never think of their own: Thus it is, they are enemies to their own ease; and that, if they would but employ as much care in seeking true tranquillity, as they do in flying from it, many would enjoy a life of as much ease and content, as it is now dissatisfying and miserable.



### C H A P. VII.

#### *Of the CONTEMPT and FEAR of DEATH.*

 HERE are few persons, who completely finish life before they die; there are few women, who can truly say with the queen of *Carthage* when dying,

*I've liv'd, I've run the destin'd course of fate\*.*

We disturb life with the fear of death, or death with the regret of life; we go not to the tomb, but are dragged thither; we run not from this world, but are hunted from it; we are com-

\* Virg. *Æn.* iv. 653.

monly

monly guilty either of rashness in contemning death, or cowardice in fearing it.

There are few who know how to preserve a just mean herein ; some women despise it too much, others too little ; some are too much in love with life, others not enough : On this occasion therefore, more than ever, we may know whether they are truly wise or not ; in this consists all the difficulty and all the glory of philosophy. In other respects they may act the player, but here they must speak for themselves, and appear without disguise. The better to examine what abuse there may be either in seeking death, or flying from it, I shall first shew what reasons there may be to make it worthy our fear, and afterwards why it is rather to be treated with contempt.

Whatever reason there may be for desiring death, is there not enough to make it void ? Seeing that life is good, death must needs be an evil. If this was of as little importance as life, God would not so highly esteem the sacrifice that is made him by martyrdom ; if death was of more value than life, there would be more reason to reward murderers than to punish them. As life is given us, not for us to destroy but to preserve it, we ought to desire the continuation of it, and fear the end. If evil be the object of fear, we have reason to fear death ; since it not only deprives us of a great good, but of that which is the foundation  
of

## 66 *The ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN.*

of all other. Besides, if all the world ~~owns~~ that it requires courage to resolve on suffering death, we must likewise own that death is worthy our fear; or otherwise it could not serve for an object of resolution and strength of mind; no one can be bold or courageous in disposing himself for, or resolving upon what would give him pleasure.

In short there is a marriage so natural between the two parties, in whose union consists life, that even when separated they still retain a desire to be re-united; the souls that are in heaven, have still an inclination to return to the bodies they once animated; and in waiting this return their glory seems not yet accomplished. Indeed this alliance is so close, that the saints themselves have found their desires divided between *grace* and *nature*; when the love of heaven hath made them wish for the union of their soul with God; the love of life hath made them dread the separation of soul and body.

Thus then is death to be feared; let us now consider why we should condemn it. What reason is there to fear an end of this life, if we believe that a life so infinitely happy will succeed it? Especially, if by ceasing to live in this world we cease to be wretched, we break our chains and escape from prison; for does not death give liberty to the soul, when it separates it from the grosser body, and exempts it  
from

from all the pains and maladies to which it is subject while bound thereto? During this life the soul is in a captivity, which is not only burdensome to it, but even disgraceful; by reason of this union with matter, it is disturb'd with so many infamous passions, it trembles with fear, is inflamed with desire, it suffers grievous pangs, is subject to the injuries of the elements, and the malign influence of the stars: It must necessarily partake of all the inconveniences of this lower world, and live with the body, as a wife does with a bad husband, whose imperfections and absurdities she is obliged to endure patiently.

But further, tho' death be full of darkness it restores light to us; tho' it closeth our bodily eyes, it takes off the bandage from those of the soul, which can see and know nothing clearly in this life, which is often deceived here by the false report of the senses, which cannot in this state judge of the substance that lies conceal'd under the veil of accidents, which sees but darkly as through a glass the blessed objects of its hope, and which cannot but have a false image and strange representation of itself: It is herein like the poet's *Io*\*, who being changed into a cow, look'd in vain into the fountains to see her beauty, where she saw not herself in the form of a damsel, but only in the rough hide of a beast.

\* Ovid. Met. i. 568.

All this is nothing, the philosophy of christians goes much farther in this respect than that of idolaters; as it hath more light, it hath more courage; and as it hath better promises, it hath stronger hopes: In truth the fear of death comes often from a bad cause; it comes from our forgetfulness of immortality; it comes from either infidelity or ignorance. How can they who believe heaven to be full of all delights be afraid to go thither? We do not know how to compare the evils of this life with the good things of the other, and therefore fail either in memory or belief.

In a word, to what purpose serves this fear of death but to anticipate and advance death itself? Must we not own that it is more natural than reasonable or profitable? That it makes us run into evil instead of avoiding it? As hope makes us enjoy as it were good before it comes, fear exposeth us to evil before it really strikes us: The one satisfies us with the bare prospect of good, the other persecutes us with that of evil; these two passions play upon us differently, the one with threatnings, the other with promises: So that in proportion as we hope to live, we fear to die; the apprehension of death comes only from an excessive love of life. What strange confusion! we are afraid of every thing, as if we were to die every moment; we desire every thing, as if we were to live always. The source of this error is example  
with



with old people ; and with the young, the time of age : But since the old cannot live much longer, and the young may soon die, is it not better to dispose ourselves for death, by preparing for and contemning it, than by being too much in love with life, to build an eternity on a foundation of sand ?

To speak freely : Are there not very few who think they shall die of old age ? Are there any so aged, who do not believe they shall live another year ? Who is there, that thinks he shall die by defailure of strength ? That he shall end with the bounds that nature hath set to life ? Are there any bounds, which we hope not to pass ? Indeed we never finish life according to our own reckoning ; we still expect another hour, when the last is run. Thus then doth the fear of death abuse us ; our hopes last as long as our desires ; and as we desire always to live, we always hope so to do.

But there is another sort of error ; there are some who own that death is not so terrible in itself, as upon the account of its uncertainty, and that were they assured of his coming, they should rather meet him, than fly from him ; they should often think of him, instead of forgetting him. But surely this is a weak reason ; for if nothing else troubled them it would be easy to prevent this by a due preparation, so that they never could be surpris'd. When we know not where death expects us, cannot we every

every where expect him? Death surpriseth **not** such as are so disposed; he surpriseth not **those** who look for his coming; by our readiness **we** prevent death from ever being violent, and **by** our preparation from its being sudden.

I know **not** how therefore to excuse **those** women, who cannot endure that we should ever speak to them of death; who think they do enough to forget it, that they may not fear it, and therefore dread it not, because they **never** think of it. They would surely blush, if they consider'd that they owe all their resolution herein to forgetfulness; that it is not courage to shut their eyes for fear of being terrified at the sight of their enemy. This is not to defend themselves, but to suffer him to strike them in the dark; and that this is not to be more bold, but more blind and ignorant; it would be much better to employ their meditations thereon, and to accustom themselves to his image, that they may despise him when he comes himself.

But what need is there of so many reasons to persuade women to the contempt of death? Why will they not do for virtue's sake what many have done by mere passion? If for a little disgust, a small vexation, or a slight misfortune some have run too hastily to meet death, why should they fly from it on good occasions, and when they ought to testify their constancy and courage? But not to deny them the praises that  
are

are due, I must own, the little I have read in history, is adorn'd with the resolution of those who have been more afraid of sin than of death, who chose rather to lose their life than their honour or innocence; and who freely exposed it for their parents, their husbands, their country, and their religion \*.



C H A P. VIII.

*Of the true SCIENCE for an accomplish'd  
WOMAN.*

**A**MONG all the human sciences none seem of more importance than physic, law, and morality: Physic is necessary, as it regards the constitution of the body and the preservation of life; law, as it is concern'd in the administration of affairs, which could not otherwise be carried on in the world; but morality more so, as it is employ'd in the conduct of the mind, and for its object hath vice and virtue; and yet this is what is studied with the least earnestness, and pursued with the slightest application. There are public schools

\* The Author here ended his second part; but finding that his ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN still wanted something with regard to *Christian Morals*, he was pleas'd to add the following discourses; for which, I think, she owes him a greater obligation than for all the excellent instructions before given. See the *Preface*.

for

for the former two, and in order to attain the knowledge of them no time is thought long, no labour spared; whereas morality seems universally neglected, and can scarce find either masters or scholars. It is nevertheless as much more noble and more useful than either law or physic; as it is more dangerous to be infected with the maladies of the soul than with those of the body, and as virtue is incomparably above health or fortune. In truth it not only surpasseth the other two, but seems itself in some measure to contain them; we may even say, they are the branches of this trunk and the rivers of this spring; for were we to live up to the strict rules of morality, judges and physicians would be almost superfluous; were we to follow the laws of temperance and of right reason, we should not have so many complaints on unpalatable medicines and expensive lawsuits; there would be fewer diseases and less wretchedness. This our science can both heal and keep order; it hath laws and remedies, punishments and rewards, and was therefore the only study of the ancient philosophers. *Plutarch* assures us, that *the seven wise men of Greece* \* *devoted themselves to the knowledge of manners, and that Thales was the only one who studied any thing else but morality*; this is the

\* *Periander, Solon, Bias, Thales, Cleobulus, Pittacus, Chilon.* They were properly but five; *Cleobulus* and *Periander* usurped the title. See *Plutarch* on *Ei* at *Delfi*, and in the life of *Solon*.

true school of active wisdom. If other parts of philosophy give a mouth to reason, this gives her hands ; it finishes the man, and we may justly say that if reason is *natural morality* but defective, *morality* is reason acquired and more perfect.

Let not any one after this shew himself so self-opinionated, as to deny its being equally necessary to both sexes ; or say that if men are wrong in not studying it enough, women are more so in studying it at all : Since women are oblig'd as much as men to know the difference of good and evil, and to live according to the rules of right reason ; since, I say, they ought to aspire to the same perfection and to the same felicity ; since they have the same laws to follow, the same maladies to be healed, and the same soul to be instructed.

I shall not do here as many do, who in speaking or writing in the persuasive stile, reserve their strongest arguments for the last ; but shall exhibit mine in the beginning, to shew that it is tyranny in us to debar women this science, it is meanness in them to renounce it, and deprive themselves of so valuable a good for fear of breaking a bad custom ; to shew, I say, that as they have the same need of moral virtues, and no less an inclination thereto, we do wrong in demanding the practice of what we deny them the proper means of knowing.

And who can doubt that the virtue of women is the same with that of men ? *What difference,*

ference, saith Plutarch, is there between the ~~po~~udence of Tanaquil and that of Servius \*? Was it not the same magnanimity that inspired both Brutus and Porcia †? Or was the generosity of Pelopidas ‡ contrary to that of Timoclea ||? If in any thing they are not altogether alike either from a diversity of intention or complexion, this difference makes no change in the sort of virtue, any more than the difference of countenances in that of men; nor is there any more difference between the virtue of men and that of women, than between the virtue of women themselves. Irene \*\* lov'd her husband, but not in like manner as Alceſtis †† lov'd Admetus. Cornelia was not so magnanimous as Olympias ††, nor Zenobia ||| as Penelope. We may say the same of men; Cato was just,

\* Tanaquil, wife of Tarquinius Priscus, the fifth king of the Romans, A. M. 3335. Servius Tullius his successor, A. M. 3375. See Plutarch on the fortune of the Romans.

† The wife of Brutus and daughter to Cato. See Plutarch's life of Brutus.

‡ A brave captain the son of Hippoclus of Thebes, and friend of Epaminondas. See his life in Plutarch.

|| A lady of noble parentage, sister of Theagenes the Theban. See Plutarch on the virtues of women, and in the life of Alexander.

\*\* An Athenian; the wife of Leo IV. emperor, A. D. 775.

†† She died to save her husband. See Eurip. Alceſtis. Ovid. de Arte Amandi, lib. iii. 20. Juv. vi. 652.

‡‡ Olympias, the wife of Philip of Macedon and mother to Alexander. See Plutarch in the life of Alexander; and in his morals on conjugal precepts.

||| The wife of Odenatus king of Palmyra in Syria.

but

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not after the same manner as *Agestlaus* ||; there was a difference in the prudence of *Nestor* and that of *Ulysses*, as in valour between *Achilles* and *Ajax*; and yet shall we say there are more virtues than one, of justice, of prudence, or of valour? These slight differences change not the essence of the virtue, but only its appearance; it is the same virtue under other habits, and in different circumstances. As nature gives the same light to men as to women, art teaches them the same morality; reason and virtue are of two sexes, tho' of the same species; nor can women renounce this science without renouncing a privilege and an advantage, which in right of their birth they have in common with men.

We may reason in the same manner concerning the passions, as the virtues, and shew that as women are subject to the same maladies they are capable of the same cure; for what difference is there between the incest of *Biblis* for *Caunus*\*, and that of *Antiochus* for *Stratonice* †? Had not *Procris* the same jealousy of her husband, as *Cyanippus* ‡ of his wife? And who can say there was any difference in the desperation of *Nero* and *Messalina*, when they both became

|| An *Athenian* the brother of *Thamistocles*. See *Plutarch's Laconic Apothegms*.

\* Her brother, *Ovid. Met. lib. ix. ver. 454.*

† His mother-in-law, wife of *Seleucus*, who resign'd her to his son to save his life. See *Plutarch* in the life of *Demetrius*.

‡ The *Thessalian*. See *Plutarch's parallels of Greeks and Romans*.

so abandon'd as to find no one that would assist them either living or dying? We must not think there is other virtue or other vice for women, any more than there are other punishments or other laws; they have, no doubt, the same enemies to contend with, and the same shipwrecks to avoid. Ought they not therefore to know the art of sailing and conquering as well as men, especially as it is within themselves that these storms arise and these seditions are fomented? Will any one say that, weak as they are, they have help at hand, and there are wise men, whom they may consult for their defence and for their conduct? Must they then, in every moment of passion or inquietude, go look for a philosopher? Must they be oblig'd to borrow a good, which they may find in their own breast, without having recourse to others, provided they are permitted to prepare themselves by means of this science? In short, must they walk by the light of flambeaux, when they might enjoy mid-day as well as the learned, and be illumined with the source of light? Indeed it is a shameful dependence to be always under guides for fear of going astray, guides, who are sometimes more blind than those whom they pretend to conduct, and at least are troublesome, if they lead them not out of the way; would it not be better for them to know the art of curing themselves than to receive medicine from the hand of others? Let us confess the truth, the remedies that are prescrib'd them are not



not only disagreeable but dangerous; for as in diseases of the body the physicians themselves must submit to the advice of others; on the contrary, in those of the soul no prescription whatever can be so proper as our own; if there is danger of mistaking our own case in a fever, there is much more in receiving the opinion of others with regard to an irregular passion.

As no person can see clearly into our soul, we can have no dependence upon foreign aid; none but ourselves alone can honestly calm this internal tempest; none but ourselves can oppose an enemy who is out of the sight as well as the reach of others; the hand can no more reach the bottom of the soul than the eye. The case is often such here, that we must contend alone without any friend to comfort or assist us; it is here, I say, that the vices or passions act like thieves, who when they have entered an house make it fast to prevent any help from without.

What sad distasters happen from ignorance of morality! what shameful passions! In what danger are women, when they dare not tell their foible and know not how to conquer it! how is it possible not to be overcome, when they know no remedy, and are ashamed to seek one; when they have not strength enough to defend themselves, nor courage to complain! how many have been lost on this account, when otherwise their maladies were by no means incurable!

Had the infamous *Nisimene* \* been well instructed in this our science, she had never given herself up to so vile a passion; morality would soon have stifled her flame, by opposing the deformity of her crime to the beauty that occasion'd it. But what method did she take? She applied not to a philosopher but to her nurse, who was more concerned to see her sorrowful than vitious, and took more pains to oblige than to reform her.

It is impossible but that they should yield even to the weakest of enemies, when the fear of asking relief is stronger than the desire of receiving it; how seldom would they fail of victory, if they studied manners! how content, how happy, and virtuous would they live! There is no case, in which morality will not give the means of repelling violence or preventing surprise. . . Whatever good advice they may happily receive, when they stand in need of it; if it be an happiness to meet with good guides, it would surely be more to their honour not to want them.

Then would they have no occasion to blush at the victory of their enemies, or the intimacy of their physicians; they would be more ashamed of sin than of the infamy that attends it; they would not prefer their reputation to their

\* She fell in love with her father *Nislaus*, and for this crime was suppos'd to be turn'd into an owl. Ovid. Met. lib. ii. ver. 591.

innocence.

innocence. I know no better reason than this to oblige women to the study of this science, nothing more powerful to persuade them to learn the art of conquering their passions, than to represent to them the shame of a discovery ; than to shew them, that the cure which they seek from others is irksome on the account of dependence, or uncertain because no one can truly know their malady, or dangerous because they may possibly reveal it.

I design then not only to prove that this science is as necessary to the fair sex as to us, but that it is more so, on account of that natural bashfulness which makes them more afraid than men of the discovery of any shameful intention. What can be more true, or what objections can the greatest enemies to women and this science raise against it? Will they say, that if they are ashamed to speak of their crimes they are not ashamed to commit them? That their modesty testifieth a greater aversion to penitence than to sin, or that the same devil who takes away fear from them, when they are to commit sin, gives it them back again when they have committed it, to hinder their repentance?

This is false and scandalous, deserving rather chastisement than an answer ; I mean not here to make an apology for them : This is as far from my design, as they are from standing in need of it, especially as I shall subjoin a particular discourse on the aversion they have or ought to

have for sin; but I maintain, that naturally women are at as much pains to practise virtue as they have an inclination thereto, which shews that the study of morality is rather more requisite for them than for men.

Since nature gives them not equal strength for virtue, they must either be permitted to study it, or to sin with impunity; in this the contradiction of slanderers stands confounded: They own this sex the weaker, and yet think it strange they should acquire by art what nature denies them. They consider not, that as to support a sickly constitution in life physic must use its utmost art, and have its due effect upon the body; so, to make a mind that is weak and easily borne down by sin, steady in the practice of what is good, morality had need employ its strongest reasonings and most divine precepts.

There are some persons of so happy a constitution, as to be at little or no pains to conquer vice; as there are fortresses which can defend themselves without much trouble to guard them, by reason of their advantageous situation and the strength of their walls. But as the places which are weak having neither ditch nor bastions, have need to be well garrison'd with soldiers, so persons that have scarce any advantage from nature, ought well to fortify themselves, and repair by study what the unhappiness of birth hath left weak and unguarded.

And

And yet even they who own the fair sex most infirm, permit them not to study nor seek a remedy for their weakness; they would have them as expert in goodness as men, tho' they have not like them the assistance of the sciences nor the advantages of nature. They demand of them miraculous virtues; they blame them for losing a victory, when they deny them the means to gain it; having taken from them all sorts of antidote, they condemn instead of pitying them for being poisoned. What can be more ridiculous or more unjust? They would have women pass through the most dangerous seas, as it were upon an hurdle, and save themselves in a storm by floating on a plank, while they themselves sail not but in well-rigged vessels, and have studied all that is requisite in the art of navigation.

All this reasoning is founded upon the sentiment of those who accuse women of having more inclination to evil than men; but this opinion is as false as it is injurious. We ought not to think that the study of morality is the more necessary for women, because they are naturally more weak; weakness is common to both sexes, as well as ignorance. Men have no more natural virtues or knowledge than women; it is as requisite for the one as the other, to have them infused by grace or acquired by study. I am under no concern therefore to shew, that they are the more obliged

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to study virtue, on account of any repugnancy thereto and the weakness of their sex; I would by no means found this discourse on the blame or invectives of slanderers, nor wound the fair sex in order to cure them, nor decry their natural temper and dispositions, in order to exalt the more their virtuous actions.

It is easy to draw their glory from another source; they would not merit the less honour in flying from vice, tho' naturally they have no less aversion to commit it than we pretend to; nor stand in less need of morality, with all the good inclinations they enjoy by birth. How little pains soever they may be at to subdue their passions, this science of manners may still be useful; they have daily enemies from without to contend with, tho' they have made peace with those within. They are towns always under siege, which tho' free from domestic seditions and civil war, ought not therefore to live without alarm, since strangers will continually attack them, from whom they ought to fear assaults and surprises.

Was morality of no avail to hinder our own inclination from tempting us, it may still be necessary to prevent persuasion from deceiving us. Are there no evil seeds within, we must take care they be not there sown, and that while the mind slumbers concupiscence be not attack'd, as *Eve* was while *Adam* slept. We must take care that appearance seduceth us not, nor the objects

objects corrupt us either by their sweetness, as hope or love; or by violence, as fear, hate, anger, and the like. Here then morality is of use, it is on this account absolutely necessary for all women to give them light continually, and to animate them more in the pursuit of goodness and eschewing evil, in proportion to their skill and knowledge.

Can this be denied? Or can it otherwise happen but that from this science they will have a stronger confidence in the love of virtue and hatred of vice, as they more clearly see the deformity of the one and the beauty of the other. Who can fear any excess herein, or lest women should become too learned, except the ignorant and the vicious, who cannot endure a person should either contradict or surpass them? Such as love not good things or know them not, are the only persons who oppose the science of living well, and approve not the learning an art, which to be ignorant of can be of no service, nor in the knowledge of it is there any danger.

For granting that morality had no sort of good in it, what harm can it do to women? Suppose it were not absolutely necessary, either to subdue their passions within, or to resist the sweetness or violence of objects without; what peril can attend the knowledge of it? What grounds for any fear? Will women be more slaves to their passions, when they know them to be irregular motions

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tions that disturb the interior faculties, and ~~are~~ not only enemies to virtue but altogether contrary to the tranquillity of the mind? Will they be more lightly stirred up to anger when they learn that it is a short fit of madness\*, and that if the other passions disorder us, this quite blinds and transports us? Would they be less given to chastity, when they are taught that unhallowed love inspires a thousand irksome as well as shameful thoughts, and that such as are infected with it must be contented to live in inquietude and infamy?

Lastly, Can there be any danger in women knowing there is a sovereign good, which is the end as well as the source of all other, and which the wise ought always to have in their mind for the rule of their actions, as the archer has his eye fix'd on the blank, when he lets fly his arrows? Can any one think, that what regulates the intentions of men corrupts those of women? Are their minds weaken'd by that which strengthens ours? Can we think they will learn vice in the very school of virtue? This is truly an unjust opinion, and quite contrary both to the good inclination of women and the good effects of morality.

How should their better knowing the deformity of evil give them a stronger fancy thereto? Whatever some may think, this science can never be prejudicial to them; as the knowledge

\* *Ira furor brevis est.* Hor. Epist. i. 2. 62.



of diseases alters not the health of physicians, that of the passions disturbs not the tranquillity of philosophers. On the contrary, as we are not the less sensible of the access and pain of the headach or of a fever, for not knowing the cause or the effects of them, nor less broken in pieces, for not seeing the rocks and shelves; ignorance in morality may not only not be useful, but altogether dangerous. I own that some advantage might be drawn from not knowing evil, provided that it always remained hid; and if, in spite of us, our irregular appetites should not bring us to the knowledge of it. But certainly our nature is so corrupt, that although we must take a great deal of pains to study what is good, yet to learn what is not so, we have no need of either school or college: Guides are necessary for our finding the right path, but not for our going astray.

*God, says an holy father, made the light, but darkness was neither by creation nor command.* As it came of itself therefore into the world there needs no art to give it entrance into the mind, but much is required to repel it thence; there must be a school for the science of virtue, but there needs none for vice. What then? Because nature alone points out to us evil, must we employ no pains or study to know good? Because the earth brings forth many superfluous things, must we not till it and sow good seed that it may produce what is useful and profitable

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profitable for man? We must apply ourselves therefore to this study, if we desire to overcome the vitious and corrupt part of our nature. Women must learn this holy agriculture, if they intend to practise virtue with the utmost confidence and satisfaction.

I doubt not but some will here start an objection against my manner of proving this science necessary; there are many women, they will say, who have never studied, and yet have liv'd discreetly, and been constantly virtuous. But I think there needs no great pains to answer them; they will soon see their error, if they will consider the difference between those who are good merely by constitution, and those who add to this good inclination the several aids of science and study. The virtue of the former is, as it were, trembling and uncertain; and we may judge from their practising it without skill, that it hath also less security, less contentment, and less honour.

Such as are good after this sort are like those who are placed in a fine seat or garden of pleasure, but who have neither arms nor strength to defend themselves when any one would displace them. The first that attacks them easily despoils them of their possessions, and the least violence turns them out; and indeed no one can well call us either ingenious or happy, if we know not that we are so ourselves; we can never have felicity or skill without this reflection;  
without

without it the learned are not firm in their opinion, nor the virtuous in their probity. The science of manners therefore is absolutely necessary to render our good inclinations more secure, and more strongly to oblige us in the pursuit of good; for, no doubt, tho' some women may be virtuous without knowing the rules of morality, they would be so after another manner, were they well vers'd therein.

We may say of them the same that is said of all such as have excellent common sense; *If they reason well from the mere light of nature, they would reason still better by means of art and science.* It is but an imperfect logic, which hath need of aid to do that with certainty which it only does by chance. And thus it is with the probity of women who know nothing; they as much deserve our pity as our praise, since with morality they would be at least in one degree more perfect; instead of common virtue it would then be heroic.

And here I must likewise answer those who say, that knowledge prevents not women from being bad, any more than ignorance from being virtuous; and if they cannot contend with us by dint of argument, they will attack us with examples; they will tell us, for instance, of *Sappho* who had the reputation of being learned, and yet was so infected with a scandalous love-affair, that she could not cure herself by a leap from the rock *Leucate*; where notwithstanding

vertheless many lovers had found a remedy, and to which *Jupiter* himself, as the poets say, often applied, when extraordinarily piqued at any beauty. They will object to us *Sempronia*, who was well-skilled in *Greek* and *Latin*, and yet very dissolute; with *Oristilla* and many others, to shew that women may know a great deal of good, and yet be guilty of much evil; but such examples are to little purpose, or any proofs they can bring. I own that a woman may know morality, tho' she follows not the rules and precepts thereof; and that the practice of virtue does not always accompany the knowledge of it: As they who are ignorant of morality may yet behave well, such as know it may yet do amiss; but if ignorance prevents the former from being more perfect in virtue, knowledge prevents the latter from being excessive in their vileness.

And how can it be expected that the lights of this science should infallibly be followed, when even that of grace itself is sometimes resisted? We may add, that as the most skilful physicians cure not all diseases, the wisest philosophers correct not always the vicious inclinations; philosophy does not make us impeccable, any more than physic not subject to maladies. The stubbornness of our mind or constitution often resists the rules or the effects both of the one and the other, but this by no means prevents their being useful. We ought not on  
this

this account to reject morality, or think it unnecessary, even to those who follow it not intirely in their conduct. If such as have studied it cease not however to be vicious, they would undoubtedly have been more so had they been intirely ignorant.

We may say of women who sin notwithstanding the assistance of knowledge, what is said of those who die under the hands of a physician, after all that could be done to save them: *Perhaps they would not have lasted so long, had they not followed his prescriptions; if he could not prolong life any farther, they owe it to him for some time.* Morality does as much when the repugnancy of our constitution prevents the good effects of its precepts; if it causes us not to gain an intire victory, at least it makes us hold out for some time; if it makes not our course to pass the mid-day, at least it continues it all the morning. So far then it does good; but suppose it was useless to some women, what can be said to divert them from the study of morality, which might not be said to prevent men from applying themselves thereto? Will they despise it, because the most knowing have erred? Or will they renounce it, because *Aristotle* was amorous, *Seneca* ambitious, and *Plato* given to luxury?

And if we must not abandon philosophy, because we meet with some philosophers not so upright as they ought to be; why should women

men condemn the science of manners, because some have been found not the less vicious for their skill therein; surely this reason is too weak to divert them from it: Besides I can assure them, that such examples are very rare. I am speaking only of the science of morality, and not of many others which may be useless to them if not dangerous; nor of certain arts, the knowledge whereof causeth no better effects in the mind than comets have in the air, the light of which is commonly attended with some malign influence.

Nor would I be thought to make any apology for *Sappho* or *Sempronia*: I grant that the former was guilty in her too violent love for *Phaon*; but how does this affect morality, to own that an excellent poetess had too strong passions? Need we wonder that wisdom and poesy should sometimes disagree? And would it not be a greater miracle to see in many these two enemies reconciled? There is a great deal of difference between making verses and doing good works. There are but too many women, who spend their time in writing bad verses, and who take more pains to put their words in rhyme, than to shew reason in their actions and prudence in their conduct.

We may say as much of *Sempronia* \* as of *Sappho*; *This lady, saith Salust* †, *sung and dan-*

\* The wife of *D. Brutus*.

† *Salust* in *Bell. Catilin.*

ed more elegantly than is necessary for a virtuous woman of her quality; with many other qualifications that are only instrumental to luxury; but every thing was dearer to her than modesty and decorum: It is hard to say, which she was less sparing of, her money or her reputation; such then is this famous historian's opinion concerning this lady's singing and dancing; so that there are sciences which restrain not vice.

Not that I would be thought to war against poetry, eloquence, or other elegant arts; I know that history commends the chastity of the *Sibyls*, and fable that of the *Muses*; I know too, that *Hortensia* was not the less chaste because she was eloquent\*; that *Corinna*† was esteem'd virtuous, tho' she five times gain'd the prize in poetry from *Pindar* himself; that *Erinna*‡ was not thought less innocent

\* The daughter of *Hortensius*, who pleaded the cause of the *Roman* matrons so eloquently, that for her sake part of the tribute imposed upon them was remitted.

† *Corinna*, of *Thespia*, or according to others of *Corinth*. She is taken notice of by *Eustathius* and *Pausanias* and *Propert.* lib. ii.

*Et sua quum antiquæ committit scripta Corinnae,  
Carminaque Erinnes non putat æqua suis.*

See *Plutarch*, on the *Athenians*; and on music.

‡ *Erinna* of *Teos*, or according to *Eustathius*, of *Lesbos* or *Telos*. She wrote a poem called *Elacæd*, consisting of 300 verses in the *Æolic* and *Doric* dialect, likewise several epigrams. She was cotemporary with *Sappho*, and died in the twentieth year of her age.

—Σαφῶ δ' Ἡριννὸς ὅσον μελέσσειν ἀμείνων,  
Ἡρινν Σαφῶς τῶσον ἐν ἡμέτροις. *Brod. Epig. l. i.*  
than

than other young women of her time, tho' at the age of twenty her poetry was more admired than that of *Homer*; and that saint *Jerome* finds no fault with *Eunomia* for making as good verses as her father *Nazarius*.

I would be cautious of opposing any thing that in some measure can adorn the mind; it would be wrong to decry what is agreeable in order to praise what is useful: I only say, that it is not enough for women to know, like *Sappho* and *Sempronia*, the art of dancing or writing well, if they know not how to live well; that not having time sufficient for necessary things, there is no reason they should spend the better part of it on things that are indifferent or superfluous: And that, as in the opinion of *Salust*, there are sciences which tend to luxury, morality incites us only to virtue, and that study it as hard as we can, there is no fear of being corrupted.

I mean not, in order to prove this, to fill my discourse with the many excellent examples which history presents to us; tho' they would suit well with my design, and serve to shew that there is nothing in morality but what is pure, and that it teacheth nothing but probity. I intend not to describe at large the many learned women who have been such admirers of this science, as, in order to shun all manner of avocation, renounced all business and the common diversions of their time; as, for instance,



stance, *Cleobuline* \* daughter to one of the wise men of Greece, who made a vow of virginity, that she might be the less diverted from her studies and the practice of morality; the daughter also of *Pythagoras*, who during her whole life did nothing else but teach publicly this science, so as to keep an open school for other young women, and to read them lectures instead of her father †: And *Theano* her disciple so renown'd for her virtue, and who hath left so many fine writings for the good conduct of manners, and such excellent books for the glory and instruction of her sex ‡.

I intend not to make mention of all that have wrote learnedly on this subject, as *Sulpicia* the wife of *Calenus*, who wrote on the morals of married women, with so much art and understanding that *Martial* commends her books as a master-piece of the kind ||: Or of all that were skilled in this science at the time of the apostles and primitive christians, as *Tecla* the disciple of saint *Paul* \*\*; *Priscilla* †† who

\* She was so called from her father's name, *Cleobulus*; her other name was *Eumetis*. See *Plutarch's* banquet of the seven wise men. *Diog. Laert.* in the life of *Cleobulus*. *Athen.* x. 15.

† Her name was *Damo*. See *Moreri*.

‡ After the death of *Pythagoras* she presided in his school: She wrote in verse a treatise on the *Pythagorean* philosophy. *Diog. Laert. Jamblic.* in the life of *Pythagoras*.

|| *Lib.* x. *Epigr.* 35, 38.

\*\* The first martyr among women, *A. D.* 49.

†† *Acts* xviii. 2, 26. *Rom.* xvi. 3.

instructed

## 94 THE ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN.

instructed *Apollon*, *Barba* \* the disciple of *Origen*; or who were afterwards excellent in the time of saint *Jerom*, as *Leta*, *Demetrias*, *Eustachium*, *Furia*, *Paula*, *Herontia*, and many others, whose lives we need only consider, to learn that the science of manners hath nothing in it that can give offence, since so many holy women applied themselves thereto. There is no need of all these examples, especially where there are the strongest reasons; we have proofs more than enough to shew that morality is a fountain most pure, wherein there is no fear of being destroyed by the reflection, like as in that wherein *Narcissus* look'd, or of being infected by bathing, as in that of *Scylla*. It is here that the charms of *Circe* have no force to poison us with pleasure, or to change a young lady into a monster. Here we need not fear the illusions of self-love to make us embrace a shadow, or be smitten with ourselves. This fountain cannot be prejudicial to us, whether we use it for a bath or mirror; it shews us our spots and how to rub them out.

It is not so with other arts and sciences. Eloquence may accuse the innocent and defend the guilty, whereas morality always praises

\* When her father *Dioscorus* found that she was turn'd christian he was greatly enraged, and deliver'd her himself to the executioner; and after she had endured many severe tortures, he himself by leave of the judge smote off her head with a sword.

virtue,

virtue and condemns vice ; Some arts are indifferent as to good or evil, and take not part with the one any more than with the other ; but this science is never indifferent to vice, it is its professed enemy ; it is as contrary to it, as life is to death, or light to darkness. It labours incessantly in the defence of virtue ; it keeps us from insolence in good fortune and despair in bad ; it fortifies us against the assault of our passions ; it gives us courage in danger and comfort in affliction ; it is useful in every time of life, condition, or circumstance. It is not like those vain sciences, which abandon us in time of need, and serve to no other purpose than to make a shew of and parade.

Of what use is astrology to a man shut up in a dungeon ? Of what advantage is it to him to know the secret influences and all the revolutions of the heavens, when he can neither see the heavens nor the earth ? Of what service is poetry during a storm ? It may be able to describe it perhaps, but can it appease its fury, or still the raging winds ? What aid can the art military give to a man attacked with any violent passion ? Can he defend himself with his sword against an invisible enemy ? Of what service was the valour of *Ajax* to him against the stroke of his despair ? Or even that of *Adonis* against the sharp fits of love ? Indeed, most of the sciences are of very little use towards hindering us from being culpable or wretched. It

It is morality alone that can properly defend us against affliction or vice ; it will stand by us when all the other disappear. While the poet trembles at the apprehension of danger, nor is able to draw any assistance from his trade, tho' his budget be full of sonnets, epigrams, or elegies ; morality will furnish him with all that is necessary either for the avoiding evil or the enduring it patiently ; it will give him strength and courage, and he will find the art of reasoning of much more avail than the art of rhiming.

While the whole science of judicial astrology cannot throw a ray of light upon the eye or mind of a wretch in prison, morality will light up flambeaux on every side, and shew him heaven in spite of all the darkness that surrounds him ; it will discover the stars, whose aspect is not hidden from the wise, tho' their eyes be hood-wink'd, or even put out. Lastly, while the soldier cannot use his sword, and hath no arms to defend himself from inquietude or a fever, this science will give him wherewithal to resist the evils of body and mind ; it will furnish him with bucklers either for the warding off the blow or healing his wounds.

There is nothing wherein morality contributes not its service, as it is a faithful companion in the greatest extremities, in the most irksom inquietude, and in the most severe maladies.

dies. Hear what *Seneca* saith ; it is necessary here to use the authority of that philosopher, who hath been esteem'd in all ages for this our science, in order to shew women what profit they may draw therefrom in the greatest evils that can happen to them. *Would to God*, saith he, speaking to his mother, *my father had not paid so much deference to custom, and that he had permitted you to have employ'd more of your time in the science of the wise. Had you known more of morality, you would have felt less affliction. I should not have been at any trouble to comfort you, or find out reasons to render my banishment supportable to you ; I should only pray you to make use of those which you had acquired by this study ; you would have had no need to be instructed, but only to be put in mind of being constant.*

This is what *Seneca* writes to his mother concerning the usefulness of morality ; but he goes further and prays her, ancient as she was, to study it, and employ the rest of her days in application thereto. He adviseth her not to regard her age ; and shews her that this will always be of service to her in strengthening her against all the attacks of bad fortune, and even teach her the art to vanquish death. He prays her to consider, with what might she would resist misfortunes, if she knew morality more perfectly, when from the little she had

learn'd of it she had gather'd so much resolution and courage.

Whatever slight knowledge women may have of it, it will always be of service to them ; since if their own reasoning sufficeth not, they may at least make use of that of others ; if they see not as yet clearly the right way of conduct, they at least have no aversion for their guide ; *For of what avail is it, adds this philosopher, to offer comfort to women, who know no other sciences but those which soften or corrupt them ? We may possibly alleviate their distresses, but cannot cure them ; we may lull their pains, but we cannot provide a complete remedy.*

They must be treated like infants who know nothing more than to complain, and by their cries alone shew their malady ; it matters not to them, whether the medicines prescribed are proper, so they be not bitter. The least light dazzles them, and reason does not present herself to them but in disguise : I mean, that tho' we may lessen their pain, we cannot eradicate it. Instead of permitting our advice to reach the bottom of the soul, they deny it entrance ; the remedies to be applied therefore cannot be those that are most useful.

Instead of demanding from them the exercise of their reason, we must rather prohibit it ; lest they should employ against themselves what others, better instructed, would only use  
against

against their enemies. We can do nothing more for them than recommend plays, walks, music, or the like, to divert them; such then is their danger when under affliction: The reasoning of morality effectually heals those who are learned therein, like a skilful physician; but diversions only cure the ignorant, as a quack or mountebank. We treat those who have studied in another manner; we apply remedies more glorious and profitable; we deceive them not, in order to cure them; we set forth all that is excellent in morality or solid in philosophy.

Having seen how *Seneca* demean'd himself towards his mother when under affliction, let us now see how he acted with regard to his wife; and with what sort of reasoning he encourag'd her, when she was condemn'd to death by *Nero*; or rather let us consider the fruits of morality in this lady, when animated by the precepts of this science. She not only equals the constancy of her husband, but even seems to surpass it. If *Seneca* dies to obey *Nero*, *Paulina* dies only to oblige *Seneca*: There is the more glory in her dying, because there is less constraint.

But to go on, the stile that *Plutarch* writes in to his wife upon the death of their daughter *Timoxena* \*, is very remarkable; he treats her with all the tenderness of reason and affection;

\* She was about two years old.

he speaks to her as to the wife of a philosopher; to comfort her he represents to her the will of God, which ought to be the rule of ours; he tells her of the happiness of another life, and the miseries of this; and to this purpose he makes use of the richest and most sublime arguments; he maintains a providence and the immortality of the soul; or rather he sends her not consolation but compliments, to thank her for not standing in need of such comforts. And to shew, how far he was assured of the strength of her mind, he writes not to her so much to demand firmness and constancy in this conflict, as to praise her for the testimony she had given of it on the like occasions.

He praises her for having on the death of her eldest son, and of another \* after him, shewn so much courage, and so wisely temper'd the resolution and tenderness of an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN. And yet her loss was great; for besides the many good qualities of this her youngest son, for which any indifferent person wou'd have regretted the loss of him, *Plutarch* observes, that *his mother had suckled him herself, and had not only been at great pains to rear him, but had also suffer'd on his account a severe incision in her breast.* She was not, he adds, *like some certain mothers who are excessive in their grief, and pour forth the most lamentable cries on the death of their children, tho' they had been at no trouble*

\* Whose name was *Chæron.*



*in raising them, and scarce had ever seen them but in the arms of their nurse; or perhaps had sometimes vouchsafed to dandle them, looking upon them rather as a pastime than the object of affection.*

Her mind was not less affectionate and charitable than generous and noble; if she follow'd reason in regretting the loss of her children with moderation, it was after having follow'd nature in raising them with love. We may easily judge from her taking so much pains in bringing them up, that if she mourn'd not for them as some mothers would, it was not because she had less affection, but only less meanness of soul; when with all her care and pain so little disorder was seen in the house, and so little change in her countenance, that the friends and neighbours of *Plutarch*, who came to condole with her, could not think the news was true of the child's death. Never was the mourning of a woman accompanied with less ceremony; never was woman's grief less uncourteous than hers. It did not hinder her from entertaining her acquaintance and relations with her usual complaisance and easy grace; so that all were constrained to admire her, instead of pitying and complaining with her.

Now to what must we attribute the constancy and decency of this lady, but to the science of manners, which she had learn'd from

the example and conversation of her husband? Indeed, had morality no other good effects, and was it not otherwise necessary for women than as it fortifies their mind against the assaults of bad fortune, this undoubtedly would be a sufficient reason to invite them to the study of it; for what can be more commendable in life than to see a person of such noble constancy, as not to change, like some women, their resolution or countenance every moment?

What can be more excellent in a woman than this æquanimity, which sets them so much above the most fatal accidents? On the contrary, what can be more irksome than to live with those whom every the least affliction intirely casts down; whose demeanor is changed only with the fear of evil, and the least misfortune makes them peevish and angry with all about them? Yet such is the disorder that arises from the ignorance of morality, when the slightest distress so overwhelms them, as that no kind of reasoning is strong enough to make their mind easy, or conversation equal. But we must not think that this is the only advantage to be drawn from this science, the making our behaviour more pleasant, and our company more agreeable.

Besides the constancy and strength of mind that it teacheth us, is there any one good quality desirable in life or for society, that does not find a perfect lesson here? Upon a thorough examination

mination and search after what is capable of rendering us most agreeable, we shall find that it is not taught in any other school but that of morality. For what is required to this purpose, but that a person should be good-humour'd, not piqued at every trifle, not false or deceitful, not given to the spirit of contradiction, not bold or confident in her behaviour or discourse, not injurious through gaiety of heart, or inclined to rallery at the expence of others? These, I think, are the principal qualities that one would wish for in a companion.

And are not these taught by morality? Does not *Aristotle* employ a fourth part of his *ethics* in describing the virtues necessary for conversation? Here he sets forth that desirable sweetness that prevents us from being touchy and exceptionous, that freedom and candour which abhors dissimulation and affectation, that complaisance which reasonably adapts itself to the discourse and opinions of our conversants, that pleasantness which is never out of humour, when others are dispos'd to mirth and innocent recreation; that modesty which prevents our saying any thing rude or indecent. In short, it is morality that gives us lectures of civility as well as of probity, and teacheth us the art of pleasing, as well as of subduing the passions and leading a good life.

We must not think therefore that in order to study this science, it is necessary to retire to

the closet and shun company ; morality is not a virtue of such a melancholy cast ; it is a probity, that is by no means an enemy to gentility. On the contrary, I dare aver that no sort of civility can be complete without it ; and that, to know the world, does not only consist in paying compliments or making curtesies : For since true civility ought to be accompanied with discretion, for fear of speaking improperly ; and with probity, for fear of saying a false thing in order to please ; it is impossible to know it rightly, without having before learned the rules and precepts of morality.

There is nothing then, I think, that can be objected ; and that we need not stay to answer those who say, that women in order to apply themselves to this science, must prefer the pleasure of conversation and of reading to the necessary-business and care of a family ; and that it is not proper for ladies especially, or for those who have no need to be under concern for their behaviour. This objection is weak and frivolous, since œconomy seems a part of morality, and must draw from hence its rules and principles. I see no reason then, why we may not conclude, that of all the sciences there is none more proper for women than this of manners ; it teaches them all that is necessary to render their actions virtuous, and their conversation agreeable ; it gives them the means of conquering either bad inclinations or bad fortune.

It

It is the shortest as well as the most useful method to form the *complete gentleman* and the *accomplish'd woman*; for rightly to consider who they are that merit these titles, we need not descend to the particular circumstances of each profession; this would be impossible and superfluous, since we must then write as many books as there are different fashions of living; and to say, that among all the conditions of life there is but one proper for the gentleman, which must be look'd for among courtiers only, is an absurd and unjust opinion: For, why may not an excellent writer, a great philosopher, or an eloquent orator, be call'd a *gentleman* with as much right as a *courtier*?

What? Can we think this title peculiar only to those who sometimes prefer interest to amity, and fortune to virtue? who not very uncommonly profess ignorance, and to know no other art but that of deceiving with a good grace, and concealing their vices under the appearance of probity; who are more anxious after a smart air than a sound judgment; who are always talking of their dogs, and horses, fencing, dancing, plays, dress, and the like; and indeed know many things which a man may very well be ignorant of without losing the title of a gentleman?

But supposing these galantries, studied airs, and graces were necessary, surely these are not what is to be most esteem'd, or the only things that

are to be learned. These are but, as I may say, the externals either of man or woman; and I beg it may be look'd upon as an infallible truth, that as neither sex can acquire esteem without having prudence, it is impossible to have prudence without probity, or probity without morality. This is the foundation of all my discourses, and ought to be so of every intention.


Especially women ought to think, that they are much more oblig'd than the heathens to apply themselves to the science of moral virtue, because they are promis'd other rewards for the practice of it; their obligation is the greater, because the way to perfection is now more plain and easy. Christian virtues not only ennoble the moral, but support, assist, direct, and encourage them; christian virtue brings the same advantage to moral virtues, as the rational soul to the more gross and sensitive, when it is infused therein. I have no mind to pursue this matter further, and to fling into one discourse all that I intend for the following chapters; wherein I shall endeavour to demonstrate, God willing, that christianity by no means hinders women from being agreeable to men of sense; that the piety, which God requires at our hands, is not contrary to that courteous behaviour that is requisite to make conversation amiable; and that, if there was never any age, wherein a woman could be said  
to

to be accomplish'd without the moral virtues, it is impossible to form such a one in this, without wishing her adorn'd with christian virtue.



C H A P. IX.

*The COQUETTE.*

 **ERE** women to apply themselves to the science of manners, we should not see so many coquettes; there would be more genuine simplicity, and less affectation in their actions; they would know that, besides the care of a good conscience and of the internal faculties, they ought to shew the visible signs of probity in their countenance, and that the modesty required of them regards not only the face but their intentions and thoughts. Indeed, since we cannot live but in some company or other we must endeavour to give a good opinion of our life; we must be afraid of infecting society by scandal; we must appear good for our own interest on the account of reputation, and also for the interest of the public on the account of example.

We must take care that the externals condemn us not, and so behave as if from the slightest motion of the body that of the soul may receive a prejudice. The wise man as  
well

well as the orator, ought to regard action and gesture; levity of mind betrays itself in our behaviour upon the least observation. And as they who have not patience to stay till the cloke strikes, need only look on the dial to know the hour; so they who cannot discover our designs before we speak, need only examine the countenance, and possibly they may see our thoughts as clearly as the hour of the day upon the dial of the clock.

It is here they may better learn what we are, than either from discourse, or by physiognomy; because physiognomy shews only what we may be, but the countenance betrays what we really are; so that he who was deceiv'd upon seeing the picture of *Socrates*, would not perhaps have been wrong in his judgment, had he seen the man himself. If in the picture of *Socrates* he saw the viciousness of his inclinations, perhaps he would have perceiv'd in his mien and gesture that he had intirely subdued them. Physiognomy therefore is not so certain as the countenance itself; for study, examples, and the present juncture of affairs may change or correct our inclinations; but whether it be art or nature or both together, that have formed our internal part, the countenance is always the living image of it, and the smoke as it were of the fire that burns within.

Let



Let not any one talk of feigning and deceiving the eyes by a false appearance; I know well enough how far artifice can go: This comedy lasts not long; the person will soon appear notwithstanding any counterfeit; whatever pains we may take to disguise ourselves, the conscience discovers itself in our carriage when it cannot so well express itself in speech. Our heart depends not so much upon us for its motions, as our tongues for discourse; we can more easily help speaking than blushing; and bashfulness is not so much in our power as silence: If the guilty may be wise enough not to divulge their crime, they sometimes cannot hinder their countenances from betraying them; the inward torture of remorse signs their confession in the disorder of their carriage before they come to the rack or gibbet.

On this account perhaps it is more easy to deceive the blind than the deaf, or to dissemble before the one than the other; and from hence too perhaps they who have consider'd this affair, say there are two sorts of physiognomy, the one natural, the other acquired; this shews the present passions, that only such as we may be subject to by birth; and the natural we think the less important, because not so many live according to their inclinations, as according to habit.

But granting it were otherwise certain, and that its conjectures are strong enough, whereby to  
judge

judge of probity or vitiousness, when we follow our constitution and act rather according to the (suppos'd) influence of the stars than by the conduct of reason; since the one is not in our power, we ought to correct the other which depends upon ourselves, and render false the appearance of vice in the lineaments of the face, by the decent modesty of our carriage.

This is what the ethics of *Aristotle*, as well as those of *Thomas Aquinas*, command us to study; and for this reason all in general allow the regulating the external to be a particular virtue; and if this is necessary to both sexes, it is especially so for women whose natural modesty obliges them to be the more circumspect. Philosophy, both sacred and profane, speak here after the same manner, and give the same precepts, tho' their ends are different enough. The *Pagans*, who commonly were more concern'd for reputation than virtue, took also more pains for apparent probity than for the true. On the contrary, christians ought not to content themselves with the appearance, but to have more dread of sin than of the dishonour that attends it. This is what women ought principally to remember, and to think, that not to be coquettes it is not enough to reform the countenance, but they must first reform the conscience; for whatever appears bad upon the countenance is but the effect of what is bad in the soul.

I would

I would not have it thought that by desiring a modest appearance, I intend to draw the picture only of an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN, or require nothing more than theatrical decency ; it is easy to judge, that the same God who condemns the scandalous approves not of hypocrites ; that we must not deceive our neighbours, but edify them ; and that it is not artifice but truth that sets a good example. Of what service will it be to take less pains to please him who sees our thoughts, than those who only regard our outward behaviour. To do well we must retrench all that is vicious in the soul, if we would correct, as we ought, whatever may give offence in the countenance ; we must purify the source, and the heart must be modest if the face will appear so.

Coquetry is not a vice of to-day, but hath long ago been cried down. I am not the first that have attack'd it, tho' perhaps the first that have done it in so public and plain a manner ; and I think we need not invent any new invectives against coquettes, since those which antiquity offers are enough to confound them. I intend not to make use of any but the most celebrated and best known histories ; let any one only read what *Tacitus* hath wrote of *Poppea Sabina* \*, to learn in what sort of esteem co-

\* She was the daughter of *Titus*, but took her name from the illustrious *Poppeus Sabinus* her mother's father. She was first married to *Rufus Crispinus*, then to *Otho* ; who being sent into *Lusitania*, *Nero* divorced his wife *Octavia* and married *Poppea*. *Tacit. Annal.* 13.

quettes

quettes have been ever held, and that there never was an age, when women were not despis'd who wanted an unaffected modesty. After this I think I need not amuse myself with describing the qualities, or the marks of an affected coquette. It is not necessary for women that I should shew them their blemishes ; I shall only present them with a mirror wherein they may see themselves ; and wherein, without blushing at the observations and corrections of another, they may make what reflections they please upon their own defects.

The single example of this lady displays every circumstance belonging hereto, and cannot fail of causing all the horror that persons of high birth ought to have against affectation. There is no trick or artifice that she did not employ to please *Nero* ; she was not content with her natural beauty, nor with the common care or a decent dress ; but it is amazing to think what pains she took every night to daub her face over with a paste, and hide it as it were in a case, that the colour might appear more fresh and clear in the morning : She never bathed but in milk, so that she was attended with a troop of she-asses, tho' she took a walk but half a mile. Never was a woman more curious in odours and perfumes ; she never shewed but a part of her face, to heighten the curiosity of seeing the rest.

Now what was her design in all this but to display the coquette ? She would fain please the emperor,

emperor, but when *she had work'd up his affection to a pitch of vehemence and impatience, she chang'd her former behaviour into baughtiness and despite*; she studied not so much to possess the good graces of *Nero*, as to rob *Octavia* of them to whom only they were due. To this end she was not satisfied with attacking her beauty, but fell upon her innocence, and carried her point so far, as, having suborn'd a domestic of *Octavia's* to accuse her of criminal amours with a musician \*, to cause her to be condemn'd and banish'd from *Rome*. But how ready are the world to testify an affection for virtue! mutmurs and complaints fill the streets upon this her condemnation. The people, saith *Tacitus*, *who commonly speak more freely on account of their natural simplicity, and having less danger to fear from the lowness of their fortune, began to clamour against the emperor*: The seeds of sedition are sown; they break down the statues of *Poppea*, and fondly bear the images of *Octavia* upon their shoulders; so that the emperor being alarm'd at these daring resentments was oblig'd to recal his wife *Octavia*.

But of little avail was this popular protection, which passeth over like a storm, and after a little noise is heard no more: *Poppea* entertain'd not the less hatred, nor the emperor more affection for *Octavia*; she was much hap-

\* *Encherus*, a native of *Alexandria*.

pier in her banishment than upon her return. She came near her enemies only to make her wretchedness inevitable, and to try the utmost efforts of their malice. A most accomplish'd young lady must be sacrific'd to the insolence of a coquette; she must now be accused by one who should own himself guilty with her; and for this vile purpose *Nero* judg'd none so proper as *Anicetus* \*, the same who had accomplish'd for him the murder of his mother.

*Octavia* is condemn'd to die, nor can all her prayers and vows move pity; her veins are open'd; but as her blood was chill'd through fear, and flow'd not fast enough to satisfy *Poppea*, she was stifled in a bath †: And this cruelty was followed by one still more brutal: Her head being cut off, it was presented to her enemy, who beheld it with the highest transport of joy, and flew to the temple to offer sacrifice, and thank the gods as if they had assisted her in so vile an execution. She is now satisfied, but did not long enjoy this infamous victory.

*Nero* himself in a casual fit of passion, according to his usual barbarity, gave her a blow with his foot on her pregnant womb which prov'd fatal to her. This blow no doubt deliver'd *Rome* from many evils, as she sported

\* His franchis'd slave; and who, as one convicted by his own confession, underwent a sham-banishment in *Sardinia*.

† In the twenty-first year of her age.

herself

herself in cruelty : But as if *Nero* could not do any good but by chance, he was greatly afflicted at this accident. This monster could neither have joy nor sorrow that was innocent ; his grief was as criminal as his pleasures.

He grew quite disconsolate, and took the pains himself from the public rostrum to magnify and bewail her beauty. He would not permit the body to be burn'd according to the custom of the *Romans*, but order'd it to be richly embalm'd, as if it were injurious that so fine a corps should be reduc'd to ashes : Yet more, he was not less extravagant in his fondness for a young daughter which he had by *Poppea* ; he named her *Augusta Poppea*, and to render her birth more remarkable, as well as her name, a temple was built to *Fecundity*, and statues decreed to *Fortune*. But this infant dying at the age of four months, she was solemnly deify'd, and a new order of priests instituted on this occasion. But how much soever *Nero* was concern'd, all *Rome* rejoiced : And as supple as the courtiers about him were either to laugh or weep out of complaisance, he could not find one among them that sorrow'd either for the mother or the daughter.

Can we find in all antiquity a more genuine example of a coquette ; or a life more proper to describe their vanity ? Can there be any circumstance for the completely finishing this vice, which is not remarkable in the history of this

this lady? When in reading it, we see that if some idle fools admire coquettes, the rest of the world generally despise them; insomuch that an emperor himself could scarce maintain his grandeur and a *Poppea* at the same time.

We see the blindness of some men in that of this madman, who despised his virtuous wife, tho' she was more beautiful, younger, and in all respects more amiable than the other: We see in *Poppea*, that the common design of a vicious coquette is to attack women of character, especially if they are fair, to draw from them the affections that solely belong to them, that they may triumph in the glory of a preference: We see in this emperor, that the very adorers of such bold coquettes sometimes become their murderers; God being willing to employ no other hands to pull down these idols than those that erected altars to them: Upon the whole, we see that if such affection reigns for a while, it at length comes to a miserable end.

Such then is the picture which *Tacitus* draws of a *Roman* coquette; let us now come to an *Egyptian*, as drawn by *Plutarch* \*; a courtesan, yet still more insolent in her dress and carriage, tho' not so cruel in her designs; and who far surpass'd the other in pompous luxury, tho' not perhaps in the extravagant care of her face.

\* See the life of *Marc Antony*.



The life of *Cleopatra* and that of *Poppea* are so very much alike in many particulars, that it seems but the same history under different names. *Poppea* would not suffer *Nero* to love his wife, nor *Cleopatra*, *Marc Antony*. These two galants were equally enamour'd; these two coquettes equally jealous; and these two *Octavias* equally unhappy. They were both more amiable than their rivals, and did all that was in their power to prevent the aversion of their husbands.

What care and what imaginable respect did not this latter *Octavia* testify to keep the favour of *Marc Antony*? Tho' she was the finest lady of her time, and the sister of *Cæsar* \*; she piqued not herself upon her beauty or high birth, nor entertain'd less affection for him than as if it had been reciprocal: She would fain go to seek him in *Ægypt*; she kindly received all the messengers and servants that came from thence, tho' it was her enemy's country; she managed all his affairs in his absence, and would not quit his house upon the advice of *Cæsar*. Where shall we find such heroic constancy? Where shall we find more affection in a wife, or more ingratitude in an husband? Yet whatever she did or suffer'd was repaid with contempt.

\* She was the half-sister of *Octavius Cæsar*, being the daughter of *Ancharia*, but *Cæsar* was born of *Accia* the Neice of *Julius Cæsar*.

*Cleopatra* had stoin from her *Marc Antony*, whose eminent virtues could not resist the artifices of a coquette. I shall not treat here of what she did in common with such ladies when they act with any design, nor describe at large her cunning and complaisance, nor the tragical end of her amours; these are circumstances well known to all the world; I shall therefore only make some remarks on the beginning of this affair, which part of the history is not so generally known as the rest.

*Marc Antony* going to make war with the *Parthians*, commanded *Cleopatra* to appear personally before him in *Cilicia*, in order to clear herself of some accusations laid to her charge of having aided his enemies *Brutus* and *Cassius*: She prepared to obey him, and set out with such a magnificent equipage, that *Plutarch* cannot describe it without astonishment, and which indeed seems more like fable than history. She met him on the river *Cydnus*, when \*

*The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne  
Burn'd on the water; the poop was beaten gold,*

\* What follows is only a translation from *Plutarch*, which I have given in the words of *Shakespeare*, marking in a different character some graces not in *Plutarch*, who by the way heard this relation from his own grandfather *Lamprias*, who had it from *Philotas* a physician at that time in *Alexandria*.

*Purple*

*Purple the sails, and so persum'd, that  
The winds were love-sick with them.*

*———— The Oars were silver,  
Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made  
The water which they beat, to follow faster  
As amorous of their strokes. For her own  
person,*

*It beggar'd all description; she did lie  
In her pavilion, cloth of gold, of tissue,  
O'er-picturing that Venus, where we see  
The fancy outwork nature. On each side her  
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,  
With divers colour'd fans, whose wind did seem  
To glow the delicate cheeks, which they did  
cool. —*

*Her gentlewomen, like the Nereides,  
And Graces were apparell'd. At the helm  
A seeming mermaid steers; the silken tackles  
Swell with the touches of those flower-soft hands,  
That yarely frame the office. From the barge  
A strange, invisible perfume hits the sense  
Of the adjacent wharfs. The city cast  
Her people forth upon her; while Antony  
Intbron'd i'th' market-place, did sit alone,  
Whistling to the air; which but for vacancy,  
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too,  
And made a gap in nature. —*

What a failing was this? Can we imagine an  
equipage more insolently grand? So extrava-  
gant was her affectation, she was not satisfied  
with

with the habit of a queen, but must shine a goddess. This is the true picture of coquettes, who always affect to be remarkable for something extraordinary in their dress, their discourse, their carriage, and their countenance; who spend their time in inventing fashions, and pride themselves in novelties even to the ruin of their estates; and who upon examination will be found to have much the same designs with this luxurious queen, when she chose to appear in the habit of *Venus*, not intending any other diversions than what that goddess took delight in; for, believe me, it is no easy matter for a true coquette to preserve her chastity.

There are *Cleopatras* in every age, who are not less insolent than she was, however less sumptuous; they have as much boldness, tho' not so much wealth to testify it: Tho' they have not the means to act like *Cleopatra*, they still shew their desire, and that it is not humility which restrains them but fortune. As pearls and the richest ornaments give no prejudice to the sober appearance of an honest woman, so ordinary clothes and even rags prevent not the vanity of a coquette from shewing itself. There is always a certain air in their countenance, which discovers what they are; and whatever signs of poverty appear in their dress, there is none of modesty in their face.

I would not be thought to speak against a proper care in dress; I have elsewhere shewn  
this

this not only to be innocent but requisite ; and I know that women too careless herein or slut-tish have been disliked in all ages, insomuch that at *Athens Philippida* ordained that women who walked in public without being decently attired should be fined a thousand groats : And *Hefycbius* saith there were judges appointed particularly for this purpose, who were called *Gynaecomists* ; and the more to shame those who were too negligent herein, the sentence was fix'd upon a tree in the *Ceramic* or most frequented place in the city. There was much the same practice in *Lacedaemnia*, where magistrates were expressly appointed, and called *Harmosyni*, whose business it was to see that all such women were punished who appeared in public without a decent attire.

I own there was reason in this, because neatness seems peculiarly attach'd to this sex ; and nothing can be more odious than to see a woman dirty and disordered. I oppose not therefore a decent finery but only affectation ; I would make allowance also for age and quality, provided there is neither luxury nor excess, and that they spend not, like this *Aegyptian* queen, their whole time and revenue in search after something extravagantly dear and uncommon.

Or otherwise, to be coquettes with the more art and solemnity, they would stand in need of such a protector as *Heliogabalus*, who appointed another senate where women might debate up-

on their own affairs, especially on dress and fashions, and all that related to the most ridiculous coquetry. Strange disorder! It was not enough for *Heliogabalus* to suffer vice, but he must authorise it with the sanction of parliament; joining this school of impudence with that venerable assembly who were the support of the empire, and labour'd incessantly for the preservation of the state and good government of the world. No doubt the women admired and loved him for this indulgence; but what honour or what glory was it to be countenanced by such an emperor, who had so strong an inclination to vice that he forcibly married the vestal virgins, to give his successors, as he said, *a race truly divine*; who made for himself a particular God, whom he named *Heliogabalus*, and to whom he offer'd infants, whose parents were still living, in order to make his sacrifices more odious and cruel; and who at length had so bad an opinion of his own life, that besides the poison which he continually carried about him he built an high tower, around the pedestal whereof was a pavement of silver inlaid with jewels of several kinds, to the end that, when he was pleas'd to throw himself from the top, it might be said it was a sumptuous death, and that never any prince had so glorious an end.

Such a one too was *Nero*, who delighted in nothing else but vice; who set fire to *Rome*,  
only

only for the pleasure of seeing it burn ; he was call'd the scourge and plague of the world ; who spared neither his wife, nor his tutor, nor his mother. Was it at all strange that such a monster should admire the viciously affected ? Or that he should protect vice, who was a declared enemy to virtue ; or that he should have more esteem for an insolent coquette than for an honest and discreet wife ?

Such then are the admirers of these insolent ladies ; such are they who praise, love, and protect them. The learned and virtuous have quite another opinion of them than the ignorant and vicious ; they condemn and decry them as much as possible : while *Nero* admir'd them, see how *Seneca* despis'd them. This philosopher being banish'd writes to his mother to comfort her, and says, that never having acted the coquette, it was impossible she should want courage and resolution.

*You never, says he, have idolis'd such things as women generally adore, pearls, cosmetics, and superfluous ornament ; their example could not corrupt you ; as you have ever loved to follow reason in the rules of modesty rather than custom in affectation. You never were ashamed, as many are, of being with child, nor afterwards of being seen in your children's company, for fear of discovering your age ; it was never your manner to paint or perfume the face ; nor did you ever delight in clothes so delicately fine, as not to*

*cover or load the wearer any more than if she was naked. You never had any passion but for virtue, and have always esteem'd the ornaments of the mind above those of the face ; or in a word you have never been a coquette, but have always preserved inviolably the modesty of an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN.*

After this, *Seneca* did not doubt of the courage of *Elbia* in her affliction ; and as she had never sort'd with the affected, he made no scruple of placing her among the sincerely brave. Indeed, he had cause to think that coquettes are subject to mean-spirited fear ; since it is not conceivable that they should gather any strength of mind from the force of reason, who spent their whole time in dress and painting. They have so much care for the decoration of their face, that the mind is quite neglected ; on the contrary such as despise these affected airs, are commonly generous and noble ; as they have a soul free from artifice and constraint, they are more capable of firm resolutions ; they despise superfluous things, making themselves happy in what is necessary.

Perhaps it is for this want of courage, that women of great fortunes but of low birth are sometimes the most insupportable coquettes of all other ; as they have less generosity they have more insolence and affectation : Their countenance is generally stiff and prim ; they are like those who are newly made very fine,  
and



and have never before wore any thing tolerable. Their every action is forced ; their looks and smiles are all studied ; and do what they will, we may plainly perceive from them, that as such who are born rich are generally less covetous, so women of high birth are always the less vain : In short, they are like queens on the stage, who shew by their action and gait that the scepter has not been long in their hands nor the crown upon their head. And as a princess in disguise or under affliction, even in tatter'd clothes, discovers some marks of her grandeur, so women that are ambitious, and who being of mean extraction have risen to the highest titles of honour and fortune, without great discretion cannot help betraying some signs of low degree ; especially when they affect a grandeur that is not natural to them.

These then may be called the coquettes of fortune, affecting to appear great ; as there are other coquettes of the face, affecting to appear beautiful ; and likewise coquettes of the mind, affecting to appear learned and eloquent. But reserving these for the latter part of my discourse, I shall return to the first sort, whom I think we cannot sufficiently mortify. How strange is their mistake ! All that they do to please is lost through their insolent affectation. It seems as if fortune favoured them upon no other condition than that they should resemble her in being blind ; it seems as if she had done them no

good by depriving them of that of self-knowledge.

I mean, that they have generally no more prudence than generosity ; as *Seneca* evinceth in what follows, that their affectation is owing to their want of understanding and knowledge ; if there be some among them of any spirit, there are very few that have any judgment ; they carry it well enough in some little points which they have either stole or studied ; but were we to see them more than once, we should find nothing new in their discourse : They treat you with little else but grimace ; and as they are incapable of saying a good thing, they are more so of approving it when they hear it. They admire no other books or conversation than what flatters them in their pride, and is adapted to a genius delighted with intrigues and romances.

They disrelish the conversation of a plain honest man, because he hath not complaisance enough to admire their follies, nor meanness enough, like some fops of the age, not only to give them approbation, but to demand it of them in their turn : Such, I mean, as affect to entertain them in their closets with pieces of eloquence and poetry, as if they could judge of the defects or perfection of any work ; as if they who know not a single rule of rhetoric could at all judge of the observance or violation of such rules.

It

It is true, we sometimes meet with women of a noble spirit, whose conversation is most agreeable, and whose advice is not less useful than their approbation glorious; but it is not the coquette that we must address, or the affected that we must consult, but in matters of tittle-tattle, fashion, or grimace; yet even these can find their admirers, nay more, even such as imitate them; for there is affectation in men as well as in women.

*Pompey* was formerly accused of being too great a beau, having the appearance of a fop rather than of a *Roman* knight; and yet *Claudius*, in describing him, reproaches him of nothing more, than of *scratching his head with one finger*\*; for fear of discommoding his curls. I need not say how much further in effeminacy the fops have gone since his time.

*Who are they*, saith *Seneca*, in mockery of these coxcombs, *that had rather see their estates in disorder than their locks? Who are more concern'd for the outward beauty than the inward soundness of their head? And who pass the chief part of their time between the comb and the glass, in order to appear smart and spruce in the eyes of the ladies?*

*Pompey's* body-guard seem to be of this cast; who in the heat of the battle clapt up their hands to save their faces; being more con-

\* *Τίς ἐν δακτύλῳ κινᾷται τὴν κεφαλὴν; Plutarch. in vita Pompeii.*

cern'd for their beauty than for the good of the public, or the honour of their general. Such was *Seneca's* opinion of male-coquets; it is not an hermit that decries them but a courtier; it is not a preacher but a philosopher; it is not a christian but an heathen that condemns them.

Men of sense have always despis'd the affectation of coquettes, and upon examination we shall find that they never had any admirers but the ignorant or vicious, or such as are interested in their favour. They would certainly renounce this vice, if they could see what a jest they are to others; and perhaps they would return to the laudable simplicity of former ages, and modesty would be more in practice with their sex, if it were in more esteem with ours. But if coquetry comes from the vanity of some women, it is kept up by the complaisance and imitation of some men; and it seems almost necessary for the good of the public, that we should behave towards women so affected, as *Jehu* did to *Jesabel* \*.

This old lady having still a mind to appear fair and agreeable, *had painted her face, and tired her head, and was looking out at a window for admirers*; when *Jehu* order'd her to be thrown down, and that *the word of the Lord, which he spake by his servant Elijah the prophet might be fulfilled*, she became the food of dogs,

\* 2 Kings ix.

who had been the terror and scandal of her people. I think proper to conclude with this example, as it is drawn from the holy scripture, and it may serve for a recapitulation of this discourse, as it not only shews in what contempt such coquettes were held by men of courage, but every other circumstance in their designs, their malice, and their life.

When this queen had an intention to murder the innocent; she order'd a solemn fast throughout the realm \*; and is it not a common artifice of the affected to conceal their bad designs under a fair appearance? See we not even in our own days those who endeavour to blend coquetry with devotion; and scruple not to place upon the same altar the ark of God and the idols of the heathens?

This queen took more pains to be agreeable to a stranger than to her husband; she used more art to engage *Jebu* than to please *Abab*. Thus act coquettes; they dress not but for their galants; or should they have any design to please their husbands, they would need more persuasions and menaces to oblige them to decency than to keep them from affectation.

*Jesabel* lov'd nothing but her pleasures; and so accommodated herself to the times and the views of interest, that having seen her son † slain, she even made court to his murderer. Such is

\* 1 Kings xxi. 9.

† *Joram* the son of *Abab* slain by *Jebu*, 2 Kings ix. 24.

the natural disposition of a coquette, that she hath no true affection for any one; if there ever was a generous one among them it was *Cleopatra*; and yet when she saw that *Mark Antony* was ruin'd, she privately order'd her equipage to be got ready, in order to fly and leave him to his conquerors, giving it out that she was dead.

*Jesabel* encouraged her husband in a bad action; and when he made a conscience of taking away his subjects property by force, she immediately eased him of his scruples, and instigated him to oppression and murder \*. The viciously affected are always violent in their counsels; they reign not but tyrannically; and we may justly say, that *Poppa* was more cruel than *Nero* himself. See we not also in the gospel a coquette, who demanded for the wages of her dance and impudence nothing but the head of a prophet when she was offer'd half the kingdom †? This is what they delight in, the destruction of good men; and it is hard to say, whether the husband, if of a good disposition, or the galant of a coquette, is in the greatest danger.

Yet further, fully to describe the effects of coquetry in that of *Jesabel*, I shall conclude with the malady that lasted all her life, and which seems incurable in such of the sex as re-

\* 1 Kings xxii.

† Math. xiv. 8. Mark vi. 14. Luke ix. 7.

seem her. Aged as she was, she would fain be thought handsome, and never used more art and affectation than now; she fancied she had still charms enough to vanquish her enemy, as *Pbrynd* did her judges. But alas! it was of no avail to shew herself now; her beauty was gone, and her reign, which needed no guards to preserve it, was over. Thus coquettes have always affected to appear young; nor is it of to-day only that some women labour under this anxiety.

There have been times when the fear of being thought old was so universal, that they could not find a person who would act the part of an old-woman even in comedy. The emperors were oblig'd to make use of their authority, and compel some one to this task, who was under sentence of banishment or condemn'd to some punishment. It was punishment enough only to feign being old, and none but criminals could be prevail'd upon to undertake it. *Strange blindness*, saith *Tertullian*, speaking of coquettes, *they pray to God, if they ever pray at all, that he would give them a long life, and yet they are ashamed of being old* \*.

There is nothing they will not do to hide their age; but of what service is all their art? Let them borrow another complexion or buy other locks, they cannot buy or borrow other

\* *Proh Temeritas! erubescit ætas exoptata votis.*  
*Tertull. de cultu fœm. ii 6.*

eyes. Here their age will discover itself do what they can to conceal it ; the paint that covers their wrinkles cannot disguise either their vanity or their years. We judge of the disease by the remedy ; we see at the same time their age and their design to hide it, so that instead of inviting a respective pity, were they humble, they rather cause horror, seeing they are still so vain and affected.

They make themselves ridiculous, and you shall scarce ever hear of an old coquette's succeeding like *Archenassa*, whom *Plato* fell in love with, tho' she was well stricken with age ; many like her attempt success, but few are so happy. There are those however, who having been tired with courtiers are content to take up with philosophers, if they can get them. When they can no longer pride themselves in their beauty, they make a shew of their eloquence ; they become Sibyls after having been celebrated nymphs ; they quit not their coquetry, but only refine it ; they convert it, as it were, to the visage of the mind.

Upon observation of the world we shall find there are many such who never fail to plead their abilities, and to shew from some common-place arguments, that the conversation of a sensible woman is infinitely preferable to the sight of a pretty face ; that there is not less pleasure in seeing a fine picture than a beautiful mate ; and that the judgment of *Paris* was truly



truly the judgment of a shepherd, when he gave not the apple to *Pallas* rather than to *Venus*: But whatever they may say, the three goddesses were but so many coquettes; one in riches as *Juno*, another in beauty as *Venus*, and another in learning as *Pallas*. I know not which is worst; I blame them all alike from their preferring themselves to one another; and there may be as much affectation in the pride of the mind as in that of beauty or grandeur.

There may however be some modesty, or at least some address in those who affect not to pass for beauties, when nature hath not given them this advantage, or old age hath deprived them of it. Tho' they may pride themselves somewhat more than becomes them in their learning, yet they never give us so much aversion, as those who are like *Jesabel* and make use of all manner of affectation to hide their defects, instead of making themselves tolerable by their modesty. These never reform; their coquetry lasts for ever, as well as the desire to be thought handsome.

How contrary is affectation to the decent gravity of old age! How ridiculous are women when they pretend to play the baby, tho' they are as old as *Jesabel*! To observe the countenance of some of them, and to judge of their demeanour, looks, and dress, we shall really think that coquettes are a new sort of *demoniacs*,  
who

who have more need of exorcists than of galants.

Coquetry, I say, seems in many an incurable evil; tho' to cure it, if possible, nothing is more likely than the consideration of the end that these insolents often come to. The end of *Jesabel* ought to terrify them. This example seem'd so strong to *St. Gregory Nazianzen*, that he made use of it in a poem he wrote against such coquettes as were too curious in their ornaments and proud of their beauty; he compares *Jesabel* with *Esther*, and saith, as the one is the true pourtrait of modesty, the other is the picture of affectation.

*These two queens*, he adds, *tho' alike in condition, were very different in their inclinations and fortune*; *Esther*, with the native beauty of her countenance, charm'd the great king *Ahasuerus*; *Jesabel* with all her art only beighten'd the rage of *Jehu*; *Jesabel* is thrown headlong from a window, where she stood to shew herself with the painted face of a coquette; *Esther* was advanced to a throne, to which she scarce dared to lift up her eyes, and was afraid of being too bold in calling herself the servant of a prince, who deign'd her worthy to be his wife. *Esther* saved her nation, and *Jesabel* was the ruin and shame of her people.

These then are two the most notable examples, that women can propose to themselves of unaffected

unaffected beauty and a coquette: Let them consider these two pourtraits, and examine without prejudice, which of these two queens they had rather resemble. Let them afterwards reflect upon the abhorrence that the pagans themselves had for affectation; and the more to avoid it, let them remember at least that they are christians and therefore much more obliged to be modest than were *Poppea* or *Cleopatra*; that the modesty demanded of them is nothing more than what the heathens themselves requir'd to form the ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN in their time; and that, as among christians, religion approves not of affectation, among the heathens reason alone condemn'd it. In short, let them call to mind that in the times of the primitive church, christian women were known by the sedateness of their countenance. They need only look upon *Græcina* \* in *Tacitus*, who is accus'd of being baptis'd, as many of the fathers observe, only from the decent modesty of her deportment, her dress, and her countenance.

Let not what I have said however startle any one. Not to be a coquette, there is no need of renouncing all agreeableness, but only vanity; they must quit affectation but not gentility. *Asella*,

\* *Pomponia Græcina*, the wife of *Plautius*, who at his return from *Britain*. having assembled her kindred, and taken cognisance of the behaviour and reputation of his wife, adjudg'd her innocent. *Tacit. Annal.* 13.

faith

*saith St. Jerom, was modest, but nothing seem'd so joyous with her as her severity, nothing so severe as her gaiety : There was nothing so sweet as her reservedness, nothing so reserv'd as her sweetness ; there was nothing therefore that could be censur'd in her ; so well she knew to blend a courteous behaviour with probity ; and indeed, may not a woman be extremely agreeable, without employing so much art and constraint as some do ?*

Let it not be objected, that the outward looks depend not always upon ourselves, and that some women may have the appearance of coquettes, tho' they are far from being so in reality. I own, that some are very unhappy in their looks, and that they may sometimes have too sprightly and bold an air outwardly, when thy are all modesty within : I know that women may be coquettes different ways, some by design, others through ignorance, and others by misfortune ; by design, when they study airs and graces to please every beholder ; through ignorance, when not knowing what is proper to behaviour they become affected, tho' their intentions are innocent ; and by misfortune, when not being guilty either by ignorance or design, they have nevertheless the face of a coquette when their mind is very different. It may be said perhaps that we ought to punish the first, instruct the second, and pity the last.

No ;

No ; there is no great occasion to pity them ; besides the consideration which they have in the testimony of their conscience, they have also this advantage, that they can easily undeceive us by only making themselves known. They are the very contrary of hypocrites, who conceal their inward pride and insolence under a demure countenance ; they may therefore seek the light while hypocrites do all they can to shun it ; they are not concern'd at our taking off the mask, since they acquire reputation by the same means the other lose it : They are not afraid to stand trial ; so that it is no less error to condemn them than to approve of hypocrites.

They have still another happiness ; experience not only justifies them, but confirms their reputation ; such as are undeceiv'd in their opinion of them, dare not afterwards judge of them lightly ; and having once been in doubt, we have now a stronger belief of their modesty. We are very ready to ask their pardon for the least suspicion of their innocence ; and should they afterwards commit a fault, there would need very strong proofs to condemn them ; and having before too lightly judg'd from appearances, it would be difficult for us now even to believe the truth.

We are not long in being undeceiv'd ; whatever freedoms any one may entertain in thought, provided there is modesty in the soul,

soul, it will always throw out some rays above. Experience sometimes shews us that the signs of the countenance are false ; but there is nothing so easy as to know in conversation, whether women who seem coquettes are really so ; we need only to observe whether they are easily exasperated, and may judge of their modesty by their patience : Such as are not coquettes are not offended at reproof, but coquettes cannot bear it ; they take pet at every little offence or reprehension ; and as they fly the light that betrays the defects of their face, they hate the truth which discovers those of their mind.

Herein again they resemble *Jesabel*, who slew the prophets and could not endure any one about her but flatterers ; but let them take it as ill as they please, I beg to be excused shewing them any more favour than I did the dissolute. I oppose nothing but vice, and think I cannot enough praise *Esther* and *Ostevia*, while I condemn *Poppea*, *Cleopatra* and *Jesabel*. There is no tract in this book, which I think ought more to please an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN than this ; as there is nothing so contrary to them as affectation, and as there are even virtuous women, who are sometimes constrain'd not to appear of so pleasant a humour, as they might without any offence to virtue, for fear only of being suspected of coquetry ; they had rather stand the chance of appearing austere than affected, and think that with regard to  
modesty,

modesty, there is less shame in being accused of excess than defect.

Such then is my opinion of vice, without any fear of offending the virtuous : I despise approbation from those to whom I can give none myself ; and I shall always have this advantage, that the aversion I have for their boldness is greater and more just than the dislike they can have to my freedom. And was I so mean as to fear them, this thought would comfort me, that most coquettes think not that they are so themselves : And I am persuaded I shall create no enemies, when they who are most guilty of this fault, will readily enough help me to condemn that in another, which flattery and self-love hinder them from acknowledging in their own actions, deportment, and countenance.



## CHAP. X.

### *Of the EMPLOY of an Accomplish'd WOMAN.*

**DISCOURSE** on loiterers will properly follow one on coquettes, this subject being a sequel of the foregoing ; for strictly to remark all the time that is spent in affectation, can we think otherwise of it than of so much time lost ? And  
fully

fully to examine the ridiculous employ of many women, and their superfluous exercises; seems not their whole life but a long idleness or a long infancy? It may not perhaps be less innocent than that of children, yet it is seldom more serious or more useful. What difference is there between a child that dresseth and undresseth her baby, and those who pass the greatest part of the day at the glass, in beholding and setting themselves in order? Surely their folly is more shameful and more ridiculous; as they are under a greater obligation to employ their time, they are much more guilty in losing it.

Were we to judge from some women of all the rest, we should be apt to think that half of the human race were paralytic, and that but one part of the species are engaged in business. While men spend their whole life in study, in magistracy, in navigation, or in the army; the women, I am speaking of, employ their whole time in dressing themselves, in walking, in gossiping, or play. But were they born for this purpose? To see them never otherwise engaged than in such trifling affairs, will any one say that they have a soul as capable of design and instruction as ours?

*Plato*, in his seventh book of *laws*, would have them employ'd in the same exercises as men are, and endeavours to prove that they are not less capable; *For in so doing*, saith he, *every city would double its hands, and would gain*



*a set of people without any addition to the number of its inhabitants. This would be the means of increasing the world one half, not by multiplying, but only employing them.* Such is the sentiment of this philosopher, and even with regard to military exercise, of which he thinks them as capable as men; but if his opinion be not just with regard to arms, and his endeavour to renew the kingdom of the *Amazons*, at least it cannot be denied, but that it would be very reasonable with regard to many other employments, wherein women might make themselves useful to the public, instead of living, as some of them do, in unprofitable idleness. If they are not born with a body robust enough for war, at least they are born with a soul as capable of giving or receiving good instructions as the soul of men: But further I say, they are born under an equal obligation to employ their time; and I still add, that in every age where they have intended to form an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN, there is no sign of their having any regard for an idle one.

But why, some will say, do not women take pains enough already? Is there any reason to complain of their being idle? Is not the time employ'd that is spent in company? 'Tis true, it is doing something were it only talking; but if this be vain and unprofitable, it is counted for nothing: For nothing? No; it is counted for sin; since it is not enough to abstain

stain from evil actions, but we are obliged to do good. We are as workmen for hire, whose duty it is not only not to lose their time, but also not to employ it in any other business than what they are set about. We are as culpable for doing what is unnecessary, as for not doing any thing at all.

I say the same of thoughts as of words, and condemn not only the discourse, but also the meditation that is vain and useless. As we ought not to speak, we ought not to think any thing but what is good ; if our soul should not conceive any thing but what is profitable, our mouth should not utter any thing that is superfluous. We must dive into the heart to know the origin of evil, and not look for purity in the river whose spring we know is poison'd. There are idle thoughts therefore as well as idle words, and we are not less forbidden to think than to talk unprofitably. As the action of the soul is more precious than that of the body, we are oblig'd to give it a more exalted object and an end more excellent.

Observe, if you please, that our mind, like the vital heat, acts incessantly ; and if we will not give it a good subject to work upon, it will undoubtedly lay hold on what is bad ; it is like the stomach, which fills itself with gross humours when wholesome aliment is wanting.

Yet more, all evil comes not from this source only. The malice of our arch-enemy  
makes

makes use of our inclinations to accomplish our perdition : That our spirit which acts incessantly may forego its necessary employ, he endeavours by all means to amuse it with what is uselefs ; he acts by those whom he would divert from good works, as the tyrants of *Ægypt* did by the *Israelites* ; they must be always employ'd to keep them from being rebellious, and to prevent their having time or means to recover their liberty : They are scarce allow'd time to breathe, and are commanded the most low and frivolous tasks, be it to gather straw or count the bricks.

Such is the artifice of our principal enemy to divert us from every holy employ ; he makes us pass away our time in trifles, that we may not be at leisure to acquit ourselves of our duty. Such is his tyranny and cunning ; he keeps us incessantly engaged in some unprofitable business, as under a yoke, which hinders us from reflecting upon ourselves, and seeing the shameful tendency of our actions ; or rather we ought to say he amuses us than that he employs us. It is the most dangerous as well as the most common craftiness of this our foe ; that, not being able to prevent the inclination we have to good, he gives us no time to think of it and put it in practice ; he takes away all opportunity of employing the time but such as tends to losing it.

Indeed,

Indeed, women are employ'd ; but in what ? I believe there is scarce any thought that would confound them more than this, were they to examine well how they spend the greatest part of the day ; they would then learn what it is that hinders them from allowing at least some part of it to reading, and profitable conversation, when they find they have spent the whole in prattling, play, or other fruitless exercises. This then is the chief effect of idleness, which at first blinds us, and then busies us in something superfluous, that we may not think on what is necessary.

It begins in the forgetfulness of our duty. They who are diseased with this languor, have no more taste of good actions than those who are in a slow fever have of good nourishment. Of all persons, of all books, and of all exercises, they take delight in the most useless. All business from whence profit may accrue is disagreeable to them ; thus idleness blinds their eyes before it ties up their hands ; thus it deprives them of action, having first deprived them of understanding. Hence, of all women none are more imprudent than the idle ; they are astonished and surpris'd at every accident, because there is not one for which they are prepared. It is not the lightning, but only the clap of thunder, that awakens them ; it is not forecast that affects them, but repentance ;  
they

they regard not the arrival of opportunity, but the sequel.

They are like the foolish virgins \*, who sleep when they ought to have watched, and who have their oil to seek, when their lamps ought to have been lighted. If they awake, it is too late ; if they chance to half-open their eyes, it is but to close them again for a long while. They sometimes think they ought to break the chains that hold them, and seem desirous to employ themselves in something useful, but never any effect follows their resolution : They continually stir themselves, as persons who cannot sleep do in their bed ; not in order to rise, but to fling themselves into a sound sleep.

They sometimes indeed seem prepared for action ; but they are like ostriches, which extend their wings and yet fly not, or scarce raise themselves from the ground. *The slothful*, saith Solomon, *turneth upon his bed, as a door upon his hinges †* ; which if you open or shut, as much as you please, it still remains in the same place. *Sluggards*, saith he elsewhere, *will and will not* ; if they take up a resolution, they soon change it for one quite contrary ; they cannot act when they would, because they would not when it was their duty.

Negligence that is born of idleness hath for its common companions irresolution and incon-

\* Matth. xxv. 1.

† Prov. xxvi. 14.

fancy ; such as are infected with it have no sooner any design than they alter it ; they lay many foundations but never build thereon ; they have no fix'd resolution ; they never say, *I will*, but *I would* : Their will always fluctuates ; they have no desires, but only wishes ; not one of their motions is progressive, if I may so speak, but always circular ; they make many a tour, but never any voyage ; they advance no further than a man does in a labyrinth.

And indeed what progress can there be in the work of any person, who proposeth to himself no other end or design but that of losing his time ? The idle are like archers, who continually draw their bow without having any mark, and who lose as many arrows as they let fly ; they are ships that float at the mercy of the winds, without proposing any haven, or observing the pole-star or north-wind. Provided they live from night to morn it is enough ; it imports nothing what became of the time so that it be passed ; it never seems shorter than when it is lost. The pains some women take to pass away their days make them seem long ; they are so solicitous after recreation, that they can enjoy none. When they run after diversions, they are like those who are continually stuffing themselves with medicines ; and as these but heighten the maladies they intended to remedy, the other only increase the vexation they would fain get rid of.

Idleness

Idleness is melancholy in the midst of her passions; she is ever discontented with herself; she falls under her own weight; she is displeas'd with every thing because she applies herself to nothing: Whereas she ought to consider, that as hunger gives a goût to our daily food, labour gives a relish to our nightly rest. What a hindrance is idleness to herself! What pains does she take in doing nothing! How is she chagrin'd at her own diversions! After all, we must do something in spite of ourselves, in order to find a pleasure in doing nothing. Business cures us of disquiet as rest does of weariness; but we reverse the order: being born as it were to rest ourselves a little after much labour, we after a very little labour take a great deal of rest; yet it is not enough to say, that labour is necessary to shun anxiety, but also to shun vice, or at least the opportunity of committing sin.

Religion speaks in a different manner concerning good works than reason alone; it not only blames idleness, but makes it punishable; it does not restrain us from passing away the time, but from losing it. God hath to no one given life to be employ'd unprofitably; whether he treats us as mercenaries or as children; whether he gives us heaven as an inheritance or as a reward; he would always have us work as he himself worketh. To animate us he hath given us both his commandment and his ex-

ample ; in working we imitate him as our father, or serve him as our master. This law allows not of any dispensation whatever, either on account of the advantages of birth or fortune.

But in what shall women of condition employ their time ? Let them accept of an answer from a great personage ; let them take *St. Jerom*, who in his writings hath given so many good instructions to women, as their director in this affair : When he teaches *Paula a Roman lady*, how to pass her time agreeably and innocently, he adviseth her never to be idle, but always to be employ'd in some decent exercise ; he would have her work with her own hands. *Were you born*, says he, *of the race of the Scipios or Gracchi, and tho' your ancestors bore in their arms the figure of Agamemnon, who was called the king of kings, you ought still to spin wool, and work as others do ; your high birth will by no means excuse you from all manner of employ ; nor ought you to blush at holding the spinning-wheel or the needle ; or to be ashamed of employing therewith the hands that seem destin'd to wield a scepter.* Such was the opinion of this good man, who, writing to another lady on the same subject, promiseth to shew her the way to live without anxiety or sin, and assures her that there needs nothing more for this purpose than to apply herself to reading, prayer, and good works ; and that these three employ-  
ments



ments will always prevent the time from seeming long.

It is true, he wrote to ladies who had asked his advice with regard to the education of a daughter according to christian morality, and not according to the custom of the world: Some therefore will say, that this is the opinion of a monk, and more proper for a nunnery than the court: But let me tell them by way of answer, that this great man knew as well the laws of decency as those of devotion; and that in all his discourse to this lady, he shews not the least signs of monastic austerity. But supposing, that a Gentlewoman of this age should think this school somewhat too severe for her to govern herself by; and that she would be instructed not in that of christians but of the *Gentiles* only; to know then how women ought to spend their time, let her not consult St. *Jerom* but *Seneca*, and she will find that it is not religion but mere natural reason that condemns idleness. Let her read in *Livy* the praises of *Tanaquil* the wife of the elder *Tarquin* \*. All the world knows how illustrious this princess made herself by her generous spirit, her great courage, and incomparable prudence; and yet the *Romans* intending to do honour to her memory, caused a statue to be made of her with a distaff in her hand. They might justly have given her a sword on account of her valour, or

\* Liv. lib. i. cap. 34. Juv. vi. 565.

a scepter on the account of her conduct and discretion. She was polite, victorious, and learned, and yet her statue was adorn'd with nothing more than a distaff: We must think therefore that the greatest sign that could be given of her virtue was to shew that she never lost any time, and that she was never idle. It is well known what she did for the preservation of the state; 'tis manifest from hence, that notwithstanding her application to the greatest affairs she neglected not the least.

Herein then she was praise-worthy in not despising the ordinary employ of other women, even after she had busied her mind with matters of the greatest consequence: She was not like those coquettes, who glory in renouncing the exercises proper for their sex, only because they are in use with women of less fortune.

But this only evidenceth how small their merit; persons of the greatest talents in either sex ought sometimes to apply themselves to matters of little consequence, as well as to such as are more noble and important. *Plutarch* observes that when the dictators were elected, it was the custom to visit the geese in the capitol to see if they wanted any thing, after having visited the temples to see if the statues of the gods were in good order; to shew them that nothing relating to their office should be neglected, and that the greatest personages ought

ought not to condemn the affairs which seem of the least importance.

It is not an employ unworthy a woman to spin, or the like gentle exercise; it is not below their sex, nor an affair of little importance to study the means of shunning idleness. There is no time to be lost; it is so great a good, that every part of it is valuable. She that can lose an hour can lose a day. We are prodigal of a treasure, of which we ought to be most covetous; the wisest of kings in describing an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN of his time, abridgeth as it were all her good qualities in saying, that *in her hands she holds the distaff* \*, after having employed herself in the most noble and generous actions.

The Romans could give no stronger testimony of virtue in woman than by signifying that she always employ'd her time; for since it is difficult to be chaste and idle at the same time, what greater praise can a woman receive than that which they bestowed on *Tanquil*? But were we to equip the statues of some women in this age, the properest *Insignia* would be cards, dice, fans, mirrors, or the like trifling amusement of loiterers.

I might here speak of the most dangerous effects of idleness, but have in a former discourse † treated on this subject; and therefore, in order

\* Prov. xxxi. 19.

† On dissolute women.

to oblige them always to find out some decent employ, shall only set before them the examples of the poet's *Clytemnestra* \*, who was hainously dishonest because she was idle ; and of *Penelope*, who unravel'd her work as soon as she had done it, because she would not be unemploy'd ; and in all likelihood had not held out so long amidst so many suiters, had she indulg'd herself with leisure hours.

Such is the sentiment of every age and the experience of all nations with regard to idleness ; this is what we learn from the *Grecian* as well as from the *Roman* history. When *Alexander* intended a present for some ladies of *Persia*, he could not find any thing among all his moveables of higher value or more worthy for him to give than the robes and vestments which his mother and sisters had worked with their own hands †. The greatest princesses were not ashamed to work in those days, and to apply themselves to such tasks as are now only thought proper for those women who must thereby earn their bread ; as if idleness was not alike forbidden to all the world, or that it was permitted the rich to lose their time, tho' not the poor.

What fault can be found with the examples here given ? The women I propose were as re-

\* The wife of *Agamemnon*, who was consenting to his murder by her galant *Ægisthus*. Juv. xvi. 656.

† Quint. Curt. lib. 5. cap. 8.

markable for their high birth, as their good understanding. I have not drawn the models from shops or stalls, but from the courts of the greatest princeſſes in the world: I am not ſpeaking of ſuch women as are obliged to work through neceſſity, but of ſuch as employ themſelves only to ſhun vice. If *Alexander* was aſhamed to contend in the olympic games, becauſe there were no kings to match him \*; ſurely the women of theſe days ought not to be aſhamed of engaging themſelves in ſome decent employ, when they find it is what the moſt illuſtrious ladies and greateſt queens have done before. This law, as before obſerv'd, gives no diſpenſation; there can be no excuſe for idleneſs, ſince there are ſo many ſorts of work wherein they may be honourably employ'd.

Neither are they commanded always to have a book or ſome needlework in their hands. After the time that is due for the obſervation of the laws, either human or divine, we may adapt our buſineſs to our humour, and chooſe the exerciſe that is moſt agreeable: Tho' I commend the labour of the hands, I do not mean that this ſhould take up their whole time; I eſteem more the labour of the mind than that of the body, and cannot think the life of thoſe who ſpend much time in meditation, an idle-life. I know that the moſt commendable actions of a man are not

\* See *Plutarch* in the life of *Alexander*.

those of the hands but those of the soul; and that the philosopher labours more gloriously in the work of contemplation than the peasant in agriculture.

I add also that the action of the soul is not less true than that of the body, but only less gross; the internal work is not less solid for being less material or less visible. The most noble employ of man depends upon a faculty, which tyrants themselves cannot prevent from acting. We can love and meditate even in bonds; contemplation is always in our power: And the action which is most excellent and noble, is also the most easy and free. If some may want hands to act, there is no one that wants a will; and if fortune can prevent us from being liberal, she cannot hinder us from being compassionate.

I do not call it therefore being idle to contemplate the works of God or to love him; nor do I think it necessary always to be employ'd in some work or other. The precept of labour is much more easy than I have described it; if business is commanded in order to avoid sin, diversions are permitted in order to avoid heaviness and anxiety. The master whom we serve is by no means froward; he permits decent sports and innocent recreations; but what do I say? He not only permits them, but gives them a reward in the refreshment of  
our

our spirits for his service, provided that our intentions are just and well regulated.

Let none think therefore, that by employing their time, I mean they should always have the spinning-wheel before them, or be always busied in reading, meditation, or prayer; or that to be an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN they must renounce all sorts of pleasure. I oppose not recreation, but on the contrary think it absolutely necessary, and very often innocent; it is an assistant to virtue, when moderate, tho' it corrupts it when excessive. I know that our strength is not infinite, and that we must sometimes take breath, to be afterwards more capable of applying ourselves to virtuous actions; I blame those sullen humours, that are for ever spoiling conversation, by the aversion they affect to all manner of pastime. They are like that tree in the *Indies*, which they call *Triste* or *Sorrowful*, which never blossoms but in the night, and whose leaves all fall off at the rising of the sun, as if it put on mourning at the appearance of that luminary, or could not endure the light. I own that such gloomy tempers are not the most proper for virtue, and that their heaviness comes sometimes from a bad cause, or is the sign of some bad intention.

I own too that temperance is concern'd in moderating sorrow as well as joy; that morality may be offended by defect as well as by excess in what regards our diversions; and  
that

## The ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN.

that the proper mean herein is a virtue which *Thomas Aquinas* calls *eutrapely*, that is, *urbanity* or *pleasantry*.

I know that the learned *Monsieur de Sales* hath left in his writings, that balls and plays are things indifferent, and that he even maintain'd this doctrine when it had given offence. Neither have I attack'd plays or other public diversions, but only the excess or disorders they oftentimes create.

For what need is there of any thing more than such pastimes as are necessary and decent? What need is there to have the cards or dice always in our hands, and to make a toil of diversion? What can be more shameful than to acquire the reputation of a gay lady? If they are not grown stubborn in evil let them reflect on the danger they are rushing into by the neglect of their duty; by leaving their children without instruction, their family without conduct, and sometimes their husbands without affection. But should it not be so, let them only reflect on the time they have lost.

Let them not think on the opportunities that play gives them of doing evil, but on those they lose of doing good; Let them be ashamed of saying as they generally do, *How shall we pass the day?* Since to speak in this manner is to forget what christianity requires of us; it is to forget that we have good works to do, and strong passions to overcome; in short, it is to forget



forget that on the loss of time depends that of eternity.



## CH A P. XI.

### *Of the TEMPERANCE of WOMEN.*

**P**LEASURE corrupts us not in so delicate a manner as vanity; this puts out our eyes with glare and lightning, the other with clay and dirt. It seems as if there was less shame in being blinded like *Phaeton* than as the companions of *Ulysses* \*. When this infamous *Circè* enchants us, tho' we still retain the figure of men, we lose at least the sense of men; our passions become altogether brutal; she makes a different metamorphosis in us than that of the *Greeks*; as they still kept their reason in the form of beasts, we have a beastly soul under the visage of man. Pleasure does more harm than *Circè* did *Grillus* †; she only took from him the appearance of a man, but this deprives us of reason itself, and lowers us to the rank of brutes. Intemperance therefore is the most shameful if it be not the most culpable; the desire of raising ourselves by the way of honour is not so con-

\* Hom. Odyss. 10. ver 230. Ovid Met. lib. 14. 260.

† See the discourse in *Plutarch*, intitled *Grillus*; wherein it is discussed, whether brutes have the use of reason.

rary to man as that of debasing ourselves by vitious pleasure; if vanity be too imaginary, pleasure is too material. Tho' this reasoning seems to regard one sex as well as the other, yet women have the more concern in it, since purity and decency are for them more necessary. It is more shameful to be voluptuous than vain; intemperance much worse becomes them than us, and tho' the sin be equal, the shame is not so. If courage is the property of men, purity is that of women; this virtue therefore seems the most spiritual of all the rest, as it draws us from material objects. Courage fortifies, justice directs, prudence enlightens, but temperance purifies, and subtiliseth as it were the body itself.

What modesty or decency can we expect from the voluptuous? Or what can we think of those who lay out so much pains on their persons, but that they are fattening a victim for a sacrifice to the goddess's Pleasure. Such delicate finery is ominous; it is contrary to virtue without being at all necessary for the health. Nay, it must be a poison when it is not a remedy: For how can chastity preserve itself amidst so much softness and luxury? *The righteous*, saith the scripture\*, *shall flourish like a palm-tree*; and the palm, we know, never thrives more than in a barren and dry ground; so it is with chastity, it strikes a deeper root in mortification than in pleasure. It is a celestial tree,

\* Psal. xcii. 12.

which

which receives its nourishment from the dew of heaven, and not from the fat of the earth.

Examine all the moral virtues, there is not one but what stands in need of temperance; without this prudence is subject to error, courage to rashness, and justice to corruption. Temperance is as the *materia prima*, from whence are drawn all the moral forms; it is the mother of the virtues and their nurse; above all, there is nothing so contrary to chastity as pleasure. And Juvenal had reason to say, *That the reign of chastity lasted no longer than that of sobriety and abstinence; purity could not preserve itself amidst so much luxury. Such froth gives birth to Venus.*

*You ask, from whence proceed these monstrous crimes;*

*Once poor, and therefore chaste, in former times*

*Our matrons were: No luxury found room*

*In low roof'd houses, and bare walls of home; —*

*But wanton now, and lolling at our ease,*

*We suffer all th' inveterate ills of peace,*

*And wasteful riot, whose destructive charms*

*Revenge the vanquish'd world, of our victorious arms. —*

*Since poverty, our guardian-god, is gone;*

*Pride, laziness, and all luxurious arts*

*Peur like a deluge in from foreign parts. —*

*Our former simple manners are betray'd;*

*Nor cares the drunken dame what's done or said.*

Dryden's Juvenal. Sat. 6.

This

This is a strong reason to oblige those to temperance who have any design to live chaste.

But granting there may be some who have no other design in all their care than to preserve their beauty; surely, nothing is more absolutely necessary for this purpose than temperance: This is what supports while pleasure destroys it. Beautiful faces are preserved by temperance as the finest flowers in a cool air; these fade away before the fire, as the other decay by pleasure.

*The voluptuous, saith Seneca, contradict the prince of physicians, who thought that women could never be bald or gouty: Now, says he, they have the same diseases with men, because they are guilty of the same excess; they have lost the privilege of their sex in having lost all moderation and temperance. The physicians in our days ought to be more skilful than they were formerly; as pleasure is daily introducing new diseases, they must necessarily find out new remedies.*

What can the most vicious say to this reasoning of the philosopher? He shews them that what they hold most dear and precious is not to be preserv'd but by the means of temperance. This virtue is not less necessary to beauty than to chastity; it is of great service to the countenance as well as to the conscience. If after this, they are not persuaded thereto, we may look upon them as incapable of being so; for how can we attack pleasure more powerfully than by the principles of morality,  
of

of physic, and even delicacy itself? Morality recommends temperance for the preservation of chastity; physic for the preservation of health; and even the delicacy of their sex for the preservation of beauty. Here then they must submit; where the design of being wise, beautiful, or healthful, will produce that also of being virtuous.

At least let one vice be the remedy of another, and let the ambition of being thought agreeable make them renounce all luxury and excess. As the covetous abstain from many diversions to save their money, so should women to save their constitution and state of health. If we cannot persuade them to virtue, let us at least sow sedition among their vices, and raise a civil war among those enemies whom we cannot conquer by force.

I am not speaking to them concerning the care of their soul, but only concerning that of their outward beauty: It would be wrong to talk to them here in the stile of St. Jerom to *Salvinia*, when he counsels her to *abstain from the pleasures of the world, if she had any hopes of those in heaven; that it is better to endanger the body than the soul, that a woman ought rather to weaken her constitution than hurt her chastity, and that it is better to have a pain in the stomach than a sick conscience.* I require not of them a temperance so rigorous as to reach the most severe mortification: I am not speaking

speaking against pleasure as pleasure, which is sometimes necessary ; and of which christianity is so far from depriving us, that it even consecrates it in one of the most solemn rites belonging to religion.

I am not for destroying but only purifying it ; nor do I think there is any necessity for being always melancholy in order to be virtuous. I shall only make use of moral reasons, whatever other might be drawn from christianity ; especially when I am speaking to those women who propose eternal satisfactions in renouncing such as are momentary ; who addict themselves to temperance not only for reason but religion's sake ; and who think it their duty to shun pleasure, not only to preserve their health, their beauty, or their reputation, like the heathens, but who intend thereby a more glorious and perfect end.

Great as it is, I mean not to make use of this advantage ; I know it would have been enough to have recommended the single example of *Heracli* the wife of *Constantine* \* ; who ordered the image of *Venus* to be buried, and the cross set over it, to shew that christian women ought not to triumph but on the ruins of pleasure ; to shew I say, that, as before the devotion of this great princess, the image of that lewd goddess of the *Gentiles* was exalted above

\* This is related of *Helen* the mother of *Constantine*, in *Ruffin*. lib. 1. and *Socrates*, lib. 1. cap. 13.

the cross, which was found interred at her feet, pleasure destroys all that is most holy and religious in the world.

As the poets feign that *Adonis* died in a bed of lettuce, christians might well say that he could never have lived under the shadow of the sacred tree on mount *Calvary*. This thought alone would suffice to throw a whole som bitter into the most delightful sweets of pleasure ; but this is what I intend not to make use of here : I shall attack Pleasure but with the weakest arms, that I may conquer with the greater glory ; to shew that she hath no other strength than what the weakness of our imagination gives her ; and that were we without error, she would likewise be without power.

We will lay aside therefore the thoughts and arguments wherewith religion furnisheth us, and make use only of such as are presented by mere natural religion ; we will leave sacred philosophy, and consult only the profane. We will shut the bible, and open *Seneca* ; *Seneca*, I say, who, tho' enlisted in the party of *Epicurus*, yet espoused not that of pleasure ; but, on the contrary, he always oppos'd it both in his writings and way of living. Let women only consider what this philosopher wrote to his mother *Ebia* ; to learn what sort of temperance is necessary for them in the opinion of even an heathen.

It is from him they may learn, that pleasure obstructs the use of reason ; that inquietude precedes, and repentance follows it ; that it is all deceit, promising always more than it gives ; that the voluptuous are slaves to their pleasures, as the covetous are to their pelf ; that had pleasure any solid good in it, it would be but of short duration ; and that it is of the nature of time, who can call nothing his own but a single instant. In the school of this great master of ethics, they will learn to separate the soul from the body without suffering death, but only by renouncing the most gross pleasures which prevent the action of the mind, and are incessantly sending up thick vapours into the highest region of the soul to obscure the light therein. It is the inferior part that supplies the passions with matter, as the earth does the clouds ; and this is what philosophy endeavours to dissipate, in order to render the mind more clear and calm, in proportion as it is estranged from terrestrial pleasures. And indeed, what is there in the world which disturbs us so much as pleasure ? Is it not insatiable, and never contented with its enjoyments ; but is always increasing, like the fire that is continually fed with fuel ? It is this shameful and incurable dropsy of the soul, which make us always thirsty after the empoison'd sweetness of pleasures. Nature is satisfied with moderate pleasures for its support and entertainment ; but  
 opinion,



opinion, which herein imposes upon the will, is never content.

When a woman hath once given a loose to her appetites, she is no longer mistress of them; let her treat herself with all the diversions she can, they only serve to increase her desire. How extravagant is pleasure! *Cleopatra* will serve us for an example of the voluptuous as well as of coquettes. She was desirous to excel *Marc Antony* in the elegance and sumptuousness of her entertainments; she therefore caused a pearl, worth 200000 crowns to be dissolved in vinegar, and then drank it off, and was preparing to do the same by another, which she wore in her ear, had not *Lucius Plancus*, who was the umpire in this shameful contest, cried out aloud, that *she had conquer'd*. How strange a fancy, and what insolence must it be, that could give a relish to such a draught!

What pleasure did *Messalina* take in the marrying her galants when her husband was alive? She measured the greatness of her contentment by that of her infamy. She never thought that her pleasure was perfect but when it was completely wicked. *Tacitus* speaking of her says, that it will appear rather a fable than an history, and almost incredible that *in the city of Rome, the wife of an emperor, should dare to marry another\**, in the most solemn and public

\* *Caius Silius*, a young married man of the prime nobility, whom she constrained to divorce his wife *Silana*. *Tacit. Annal.* 11.

manner, her husband being still living, and not distant above six leagues from Rome. Into such extravagancies will imagination hurry us, when we suffer ourselves to be transported with the desire of pleasure.

We find among the *Grecian* women \* a courtesan, who being tired with kings affected the acquaintance of philosophers; who attacked wisdom after having triumph'd over power; and who gloried more in the devoirs of *Socrates* than in those of *Cyrus* or *Artaxerxes*. Among the *Romans* we find two empresses jealous of and enraged against each other, on the account of a scandalous affection they both shew'd for a buffoon of the stage. How blind is pleasure! It sometimes delights itself more with dirt than with pearls. It is not truth, but opinion that guides and satisfies it. How full is it of whims and caprice! All the artisans work but in vain to find new subjects for its employ. It soon reaches the bounds of necessity; but to reach those of fancy, is impossible.

Herein then our appetites are justly punish'd, when, easy as it is to satisfy them while under the conduct of reason and nature, it is impossible so to do, when they are transported with vanity. Pleasure without reason is a blind person without a guide; it regards not either the importance of the laws which it despiseth, or the value of the objects which it embraces, or

\* *Phryne*.

the infamy that generally attends its pursuits. On the contrary, restraint but irritates the more; the voluptuous take not less pleasure in transgressing a command than in vanquishing an enemy; and all the circumstances which make a law more sacred and inviolable, seem but to enhance the pleasure of violation. The first of women imagin'd that the forbidden fruit had a much finer taste than any of all the trees in paradise.

Pleasure also seems more sweet the dearer it is bought, but it is mere fancy and not truth that makes it precious. When vanity hath join'd it, we regard not its object only in that wherein it is delightful, but wherein it is forbidden. Here it is that pleasure opens the eyes, she who at other times keeps them shut, and who cannot see but in the dark; here it is that ignorance itself is ingenious.

When the object of our desires is not easily obtain'd, what will not the most cowardly undertake, or the most stupid invent? The vanity that is mix'd with pleasure supplies it with hands and eyes; it gives light to the blind and courage to the fearful. What devices, what finesses to reach a design! of what inventions are they capable whom we took for the most simple when animated with the desire of pleasure! Of what sins are they guilty, even they whom we esteem'd most holy, when they become infected with this passion! do they not  
stifle

stifle the motions of reason, and even of piety itself, to follow those of an irregular appetite?

But more clearly to see the bad intentions of those who renounce temperance, we need only look upon the picture which the holy scripture hath drawn of a voluptuary\*. She is painted all over *with the name of blasphemy*, on the account of her wicked attempts, her lyes, and profanations; she is called a *monster of the sea*, from her insatiable desires, her inconstancy, and stormy passions. *She is array'd pompously, and deck'd with gold and pearls*, on account of her vanities, luxury and extravagance; *she bath a golden cup in her band*, which she presents to all the world, and especially to the great ones of the earth, to shew her greedy prostitutions, and consummate impudence. Lastly, *She is drunk with the blood of the saints*, on account of her hatred to all those who oppose her either by instruction or example. These then are the principal strokes to be observ'd in this picture; but as if it was not yet complete, the scripture saith, There was written in great letters in her forehead the word *Mystery*; the mystery of wickedness, impudence, and infamy. You see then where pleasure carries us when it is accompanied with opinion and vanity; you see, how it blinds us, unless we in good time look out for a remedy in the everlasting rules of morality.

\* Rev. xvii.

If

If we say not that this virtue is necessary to all the world, it surely is more particularly requisite for women; since it is not easy for them to observe the laws of chastity when they violate those of temperance. Besides, some accuse them of having a stronger inclination to pleasure, and of being more eager in their pursuit of it than we are: They say, that *Thisbe* came to the place of assignation before *Pyramus*, and even before the appointed time\*; and that it was *Eve* who presented the forbidden fruit to *Adam*.

But I look upon all this as scandal, and cannot think the constitution of women any more corrupt than our own; yet we cannot but say, they have more need of temperance than men, on account of the regard they ought to have for chastity. They have more need of it, not only for their virtue but for their reputation; because it is not easily believed, that a woman, who delights in nothing else but pleasure, can be always chaste; it is very difficult for intemperance and chastity to agree together.

Chastity is austere, and lewdness soft and delicate. *Pliny* says, that it was an opinion of some of the ancients, that the sun was fed by vapours from the sea, and the moon by those that arise from fountains and rivers. The wise

\* Ovid. Met. lib. iv. ver. 55.

live on bitterness like the sun ; but the dissolute live on sweet water like the moon, and partake also of her inconstancy, defects, and eclipses. Not to flatter the sex, I still say, they are under a stronger obligation than men to beware of pleasure ; because, besides the sweetness of their natural disposition, which is therefore more capable of being corrupted, they lie under another misfortune ; they seldom have any assistance from science, or much business to employ them, and therefore have I advised them to study and labour to prevent the usual dangers from idleness and ignorance. I opposed the idle before the voluptuous, that I might destroy the effect in the cause, and attack intemperance even in its source.

Christianity no doubt can supply us with arguments still more strong and useful ; but I think the foregoing sufficient. It is enough to induce women to fly intemperance, if they would consider, that it is not only an enemy to all the virtues, but moreover the ruin of health, of beauty, of reputation, and of reason ; that there are pleasures more pure, and even greater, which they may innocently enjoy ; that all necessary satisfactions are easily obtain'd ; and that they are only imaginary, which are so chargeable and troublesome ; it is enough for them often to reflect in what contempt and horror the heathens themselves held the voluptuous. *Appius*  
decided

decided the pursuits of *Messalina*, and *Eubates* those of *Lais*; it is enough to consider, that they who lead dissolute lives generally die in shame and torment: *Jesabel* was thrown headlong from a window; *Julia* was starv'd to death; *Poppæa* was kill'd by a blow on her belly when with child, and *Cleopatra* by the bite of an asp.



## C H A P. XII.

### The SUPERSTITIOUS.

~~W~~ E deal with our devotion in much the same manner as amorous painters with their drawings; they can scarce ever paint a female face without giving it a touch or some resemblance of her they love: So, in the service of God, we adapt it to our constitution: We follow his laws, as the heavens do the *primum mobile*, and obey his will; but not without regarding in some measure our own. We are always seen painted, as *Abdians* in the middle of our pieces.

Some women, whose natural coldness estranges them from the pursuit of pleasures, imagine themselves perfect enough in professing continency. Others, whose natural tendency inclines them to compassion, think that the

whole perfection of a christian consists in shedding tears at the sight of a miserable object. The melancholy, who love darkness and solitude, think that every thing must be abandon'd for the sake of meditation, and that none can be saved without being contemplative.

Thus upon examination we shall find, that many women practise no other virtues than such as suit their humour; they follow their own disposition rather than the law; it is not any command they obey but their own inclination. They are guilty of a new sort of idolatry in offering sacrifice to themselves; and if it be not the work of their own hands which they adore, it is at least that of their imagination, some idol of the brain.

It is true then that the very source of superstition is self-love, which so strongly abuseth us, that instead of worshipping God we often adore nothing but our own opinion. Herein the superstitious are not less to be pitied than blamed; that, in making themselves a new God, they make not one that is easier to be served; as, I say, they form to themselves a God always in wrath, who never beholds them but with terror in his countenance, and expects no other worship from them than what is prompted by fear; who treats them not as a father treats his children, but as a tyrant treats his slaves.

How



How contrary is superstition to the tranquillity of the soul, as well as to the love of God! How unnecessarily do the superstitious afflict themselves! The most guilty can sometimes find safety by embracing the altar, or throwing themselves at the feet of an idol: But superstition hath no asylum; on whatever side she turns she can find no rest: If she would ascend to heaven, there she sees her tremendous judge; if she descends to the abyss below, there she meets with her executioners; if she retires into her own conscience, there she perceives the dread that persecutes her.

I am not speaking of moderate but excessive fear; superstition is not troubled by halves; but as it is said that the *Pythonefs*, or priestess of *Apollo*, never gave an answer to those who consulted the oracle, before she had observ'd an universal trembling in every part of the sacrifice, we may say the same of the superstitious, they tremble all over: But they are not less blind than wretched and culpable. God desires burnt-sacrifices, and they offer him such as are frozen.

I know that he requires fear as well as love; and that these are as the two poles of all the motions and resolutions of our mind; but on these terms, that as one of the poles is under our feet while the other is above our heads, so we ought to degrade fear and exalt charity; tho' they be for ever inseparable, we must not put them

in the same rank, for this would be to confound all order.

Fear and love should be together in the same soul as *Jacob* and *Esau* in the same womb\*; but these must be produced in the same order as were those twins; if fear be the elder, love must follow it. I hope this comparison will give no offence, since in every respect it is so just; as fear is wild like *Esau*, love is pleasant and ingenuous like *Jacob*: And indeed these two passions are often as two sisters contending in the same soul, like those two brothers struggling within *Rebecca*; and lastly as love imitates the younger, and acting upon the advice of reason, as *Jacob* followed the counsel of his mother, gets the superiority of fear.

It is true, women are subject to both these passions, and have sometimes been accused of being excessive in both; but however, if we examine well their inclination, we shall often find it like that of *Rachel's*, who shew'd a greater affliction for her younger son than the elder. They love *Jacob* better than *Esau*; they are more induced to love than fear; they are more governable by gentle sweetness than by harsh menaces.

This is also what God requires of us in the service we pay him; he would have less fear than love; we may fear, but we can never love him too much. He hath set bounds to his justice, but none to his goodness. He punishes much

\* Gen. xxv. 24.

less, and rewards our actions much more than they deserve; in chastising us he hath respect to what we are; but in blessing us he hath regard to what he is himself; his vengeance ariseth from our wickedness, and his favours come from his own infinite goodness.

Besides, love may be agreeable when separated from fear; but fear can never be so when separated from love. The devils fear God, and the angels love him. There is love without fear in heaven, as there is fear without love in hell. From this source comes superstition, which for ever trembles, and is incapable of that rest and assurance which charity enjoys. The superstitious act quite contrary to *Rebecca*; they stifle every sentiment of love, and labour not but to increase their fear; they love *Esau* better than *Jacob*.

And this ~~seems~~ the cause of the great disorder in this age; this the common cause of the superstitious curiosity of many women. As they have no love for God, they have no manner of reliance upon him. They distrust a providence, or look upon it as an enemy, whose every action they study, and would fain know all its secret ways. They are curious after futurity, and will spare no pains or cost to know what is to come. As they are always under alarm, there is no oracle which they will not consult.

All their reflexions are full of mystery; having pass'd the night in bad dreams, they spend the day in interpreting them. They cannot

Speak three words without introducing presages, observations, omens, visions, and apparitions. All days are not alike proper for their undertakings, nor every way for their journeys. They are very observant of what they meet; a hare or a weasel will make them turn back again. The croaking of a raven is enough to set them upon making their will.

*Juvenal* complains that the women of his time had brought this superstition into fashion. *They dare not, says he, take a voyage, or even a walk, without the advice of an astrologer; and that the circus of Rome was full of such women as came to consult the soothsayers and augurs, on the progress of their amours, or the happiness of their marriage. That the destiny of common men went cheaper than that of princes; and lastly, that it was easy to deceive the whole world, as there were lies of all prices, and diviners of all sorts\*.* If an heathen ridiculed the women of

\* — The middle sort who have not much to spare,  
To chiromancers cheaper art repair,  
Who clap the pretty palm to make the lines more fair. }  
But the rich matron, who has more to give,  
Her answers from the *Brachman* will receive:  
Skill'd in the globe and sphere, he gravely stands,  
And with his compass measures seas and lands.

The poorest of the sex have still an itch  
To know their fortunes equal to the rich.  
The dairy-maid enquires if she shall take  
The trusty taylor, and the cook forsake. —  
And all alike unknowing future fate,  
Believe what fond astrologers relate.

*Dryden's Juvenal. Sat. vi.*  
his

his days, who gave themselves up to this error ; what shall we say to those of our time, who are so excessively curious and credulous ? What shall we say against the superstitious in an age of truth, if they were so severe against them in an age of lying ?

They are every where spoke against, and an eminent writer, making a jest of this blindness of many women, says, *that all sorts of birds should not engage their curiosity, but only those which formerly had been men or women.* So that to trust in the choice of a crow, which is esteemed an ill omen, they must think that it was once a young damsel, who for prattling a little unseasonably was punish'd by *Minerva*, and changed into this bird\*. To think that upon seeing a swan, at the first setting sail, there is reason to expect a happy voyage, they must know that he was formerly a king in *Liguria*, who so greatly lamented the fall of *Phaeton*, that the gods in pity turn'd him into a swan †.

To think that magpies menace detraction, they must believe that they were formerly the daughters of king *Picrus*, who having spoken injuriously of the muses were turned into these chattering birds ‡. Thus almost the whole art of augury is founded on the metamorphoses. Diviners study the poets, and the fables of

\* Ovid Met. lib. ii. ver. 510.

† Ovid Met. lib. ii. ver. 368.

‡ Ovid. Met. lib. v. ver. 662.

these serve for a foundation to the predictions of the other. Where there is no fable there is no prognostic; one lye takes its source from another; so that none but low and vulgar minds have ever been taken in by these sooth-sayers; the wise have always laugh'd at and despised these impostors.

But why, some will say, have we not known some dreams prove true, like that of *Calpurnia*, when she pray'd her husband *Cæsar*, not to go to the capitol\*, because she had dream'd he was there assassinated? Did not the sooth-sayers foretel the empire of *Augustus*, and the death of *Domitian*? I might answer, that if at any time they spake truth, it was merely by chance; or that these diviners know not what will happen to themselves; and that even *Pompey*, who was renowned for his skill in this science, could not foresee what befel him through his own fault†.

And as the strongest example that can be given on this subject; *Thraseas*‡ foresaw not his own destiny, when he went to inform *Busris* king of *Ægypt*, after a drought of nine years continuance, that he might have water enough

\* Plutarch. Suetonius in the life of *Cæsar*.

† Plutarch in the life of *Pompey*.

‡ Aliter, *Thrasius*.

*Quam Thrasius Busrin adiit, monstratque piari*

*Hospitis effuso sanguine posse Jovem:*

*Illi Busris: fies Jovis hostia primus,*

*Inquit, et Ægypto Tu dabis hospes aquam.*

*Ovid. de Arte Aman. lib. i.*

if

if he would sacrifice strangers to *Jupiter*. *I will make an experiment then*, said the tyrant, *of thine art on thyself*; and accordingly sacrificed him: Thus they pretend to foretel the fortune of others, while they know nothing of their own.

However supposing that they speak truth, it is commonly so obscure, that their predictions serve rather to make one fear events than shun them. *Joanna* countess of *Flanders*, blind with this common error of her sex, went to consult some diviners concerning her son *Ferrand's* success when he made war against *Philip Augustus* king of *France*; the oracle made answer, *that the king should be traden under foot, and Ferrand should be received with great pomp in Paris*. Transported with joy at hearing this, she waited impatiently for the war to begin; she hurried on affairs, being eager to enjoy the promis'd victory. But she experienc'd to her cost that truth is not to be sought from the source of a lye: *Ferrand*, notwithstanding the seeming favour of the oracle, was overthrown in this battle. Indeed the king fell from his horse, but without receiving any hurt; and *Ferrand* enter'd *Paris* in great pomp, but it was after he had lost the victory, being carried thither by his enemies.

Thus it is that they, or the devil for them, always give doubtful answers, and create much trouble. But supposing there was no obscurity in their answer, and that they could plainly foretel

foretel what would happen, such curiosity can never give any satisfaction, whether we are pleased with their predictions or not: For if they tell us of any thing fortunate, we are so solicitous for the event, that hope itself becomes a pain to us; so that when the time is come, we have neither strength nor taste to relish it. If the prediction be unfortunate we anticipate the evil before it comes; fear makes the torment of a day last many years; as hope lessens the good, fear inhancess the evil of whatever we expect to enjoy, or suffer.

It is true then that predictions serve only to trouble us whether they threaten evil or promise good. What woman was ever better punish'd for her curiosity in this respect than *Agrippina*, when she went to learn the fortune of her son *Nero*; and was told, that *he should be emperor indeed, but her murderer*? Never was woman so tortur'd both with hope and fear at the same time. Thus, I say, their curiosity always brings on inquietude. But whatever they suffer hereby, they are more worthy our laughter than our pity. I am not at all surpris'd that God should permit them to be wretched and abused. Of all women that are deceived, none have less reason to complain than those who consult these vain oracles; when they address themselves to professed cheats, and would learn truth from the enemy of all mankind.

As



As we could not pity any one that should take a fancy to play with a serpent, for being stung; how can we pity those who have recourse to the devil, for being deceived by him? Their error is but the just punishment of their curiosity.

God not only forbids any belief in diviners, but even the listening to them\*; and if he permits them to discover any truth, it is only to punish our folly. And indeed they sometimes foretel what shall happen; but it is no matter, we ought not to believe even the truth on account of the person that relates it; we must refuse acceptance, as we would pearls from a robber, who had been rifling some altar or pillaging a temple. It is sacrilegious, tho' he speaks truth; it is with a design to abuse it at our expence; and there is not less danger in believing it, than in following the false light of vapours that would lead us to a precipice. Every thing that comes from such horrid acts is to be suspected as the present of an enemy. If the advice of that *Trojan*† was just, when he counsel'd them not to receive the *Colossus* dedicated to *Minerva*, into the city, on the account of those who presented it; how can persons besieged, as we continually are, receive without suspicion any present from those who would fain conquer us? How can we accept of

\* Deut. xviii. 10, 14. Jer. xxvii. 9. xxix. 8. Mic. iii. 7.

† Laocoon. Virg. *Æn.* ii. 42.

nutriment from the hand of those that hate us, without fear of being poison'd? If the *Trojans* ought to have distrusted the *Greeks*, how is it that we put any confidence in devils?

We do not believe them, some will say; we only consult these diviners out of curiosity. Yes, God permits us to believe them; when we go to consult them against his will, we must not be surpris'd at our giving credit to them against our own resolutions. Why should he preserve us in a danger, wherein we have plunged ourselves against his express command; or grant us victory, when we have taken up arms against him and side with his enemies? When we listen to them, there always remains some impression on our minds which we cannot de-face. We insensibly gather fear from their menaces, and hope from their promises. Our reason is not so strong, that, when it did not prevent us from consulting them, it should hinder us from believing them. God denies it any particular strength for this purpose, and will not work miracles to preserve the rash and self-conceited.

There is scarce any sin that offends him more than this, as it is attacking his love, his power, and his wisdom: His wisdom, because we are not satisfied with his government of the world, and would fain pry into his secret ways; his power, because we think hereby to avoid what he hath determin'd; and his love, be-  
cause

cause if we had more confidence in his affection, we should be less curious to know what may happen to us, in proportion to our more firm belief in his will.

Still this superstitious curiosity seems much more tolerable in the heathens : The art of divining and predicting future events made part of their religion. But what reason is there that this error should continue after the oracles have ceased ? Superstition is much more blameable in this age than in that of infidelity : Especially since our Lord hath destroy'd their temples and overthrown their idols, why should we repair their altars, and take part with his enemies after he hath driven them away ? Why should we recal them when he hath put them to flight ?

And yet to see the superstition of many, we could not but say that idolatry is still among us, and that the oracles have not ceased ; for what matters it whether we consult them in a temple or in a closet ? It is not less true idolatry, because it is less public ; while it dwells in the heart, it is still in the world. On the contrary, as the devotion of the primitive christians was much stronger than that at present, even at the time when they hid themselves in caves ; so superstition is more powerful than ever, tho' it be not licens'd. It must needs have a great deal of power, when persons are addicted thereto in spite of any restraint from the law.

Besides,

Besides, it is a greater crime to be superstitious at present than in the time of the *Gentiles*, because the heathen women thought they were consulting the gods ; and we know that whatever power our fortune-tellers have, if they have any at all, they must have it from devils. The heathens were attacked by enemies in disguise ; but we see them openly, and act through wickedness what they did through ignorance.

Let not any one say, that many women in consulting these diviners do not think that they are addressing devils, but that their curiosity is very innocent. I can scarce imagine any one so dull and simple as to think it no sin : They have at least some doubt of it ; but they are very easy in not knowing more of this matter, for fear of seeing more clearly a fault which they have no inclination to amend. And suppose they knew nothing of it, if their intention is not blameable, their ignorance is ; they are oblig'd to learn an article of such importance ; they ought to know that it is the greatest of all crimes, which violates the first commandment, and which shakes the very foundation of christianity ; because to *worship God alone* is to put our whole trust and confidence in him. However, it would be better to refer them to their catechism than to pursue this subject any further ; I shall only say, that if many women were not very ignorant they would not be so  
supersti-

superstitious. *Cæsar* was never more astonished than when he saw his wife give credit to dreams ; he could not imagine that *Calphurnia*, so wise and learned, should be superstitious. AN ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN makes a jest of all these visions, signs, figures, and presages ; she takes it not ill to be informed of any error remaining in her belief ; because she thinks it doing her no more wrong to curtail it of what is superstitious, than it is to crop the vine of its top and useless leaves. All the trash of idle ceremonies prevents it from bearing the true fruit of piety : They neglect true christianity who give themselves up to grimace and shew. This is what women seem naturally inclined to ; and for this reason *Strabo* says, *that some married men have been more addicted to superstition than others, having caught it insensibly from their wives.* But if many love to abide by their superstitious opinions, and would take it ill to be reproved ; I must own that many likewise have been accused falsely, -and that very often libertines treat the devout of these days, as the infidels did the christians in former ages to discredit their piety. But what do I say ? The truly devout are not less attacked by the superstitious than by libertines themselves.

Libertines say that piety is superstitious, because it is austere and grave ; and the superstitious say that it is licentious because it is free and candid ; So a liberal person is often attacked

tacked both by the covetous and the prodigal ; the prodigal call him covetous because he gives less than they do ; and the covetous call him prodigal because he gives more ; so, I say, a man of proper size is called a dwarf by a giant, and a giant by a dwarf.

Women ought not to be surpris'd at these deluders, nor renounce true piety, because it hath enemies, and in all times hath been oppos'd ; they must not yield to libertines, for fear of being too gay or free ; they ought to trust in God without arrogance, and fear him without despair. They must be neither too credulous nor too fearful. They must consider with themselves, how displeasing this superstitious curiosity is to God ; when those who consulted diviners and soothsayers were stoned to death by the law of *Moses* \*, and in the primitive church condemned to a penance of five years. They ought to think how shameful it is for a christian to hold out her hand to a gipsy in order to learn her good or bad fortune ; and that if we would learn future events from our hands, it ought to be on the account of good actions, and not because of any lines that may be observed therein. This is the true chiromancy of christians. It is by the observation of the laws, and not that of the stars, they must regulate their lives : It is the grace of God they ought to be concern'd for, and not the influ-

\* Lev. xx. 6. Deut. xiii. 10.

ence of a planet. What reason is there to live always in alarm, and to distrust the providence of God, as they would the designs of an enemy? But I see the source of this misfortune, their fear comes from their curiosity; one sin serves for the punishment of another. God deals with us, as the poets suppose *Jupiter* dealt with him who would have stolt fire from heaven. After such a sacrilegious attempt, our mind is not less tortured by distrust than *Prometheus* was by his eagle. We must not wonder at the severity of the punishment, since it is the chastisement of one of the greatest crimes that can be committed. How can we think to know the secrets of God by consulting his enemies; or that the infernals can tell what is determin'd in heaven? How shameful is it for women so to resemble their first mother as to desire to learn of the devil the interpretation of the will of God! If we had more love for him, we should have more assurances in his promises. If we relied as we ought upon his providence, we should follow him as a child follows his father without asking whither he is going. Thus then to be less disturb'd we need only to be less curious: Let us have more hope and we shall have less anxiety concerning what is to come. We may say here as was said to *Abraham*, *Cast out the bondwoman and her son\**; banish fear and its effects, as the pa-

\* Gen. xxi. 10.

triarch banish'd *Hagar* and *Ishmaël*, keeping only charity as the legitimate that is capable of giving us perfection and happiness.

But further, we must look upon superstition in another light to discover all its ugliness; it comes not only from fear, but from cunning and design. It is not only scrupulous but disssembling. Let us compare the speeches of a superstitious person and her actions, her visage and her conscience: Let us follow her out of church, where she had been making a thousand grimaces, to see how she will behave in her family; she is not the less out of humour after all her extasies; she seems to have been in the presence of devils and not of angels. Strange it is, that she should carry in her such a spirit of division, when she is just come from the house of peace, or that she should be so chagrin'd at her return from paradise. Had she been truly devout, she would be more patient, sweet, and tractable; but it was nothing but appearance, nothing but dissimulation and hypocrisy. The superstitious woman cries out more loudly against those who bow not at the name of Jesus than against those who blaspheme; she cares not how many she makes poor, while she maintains two or three that are so; she has a soul full of vengeance, while she complains that *charity is cold*; she does not mind to wash away her sins, provided she can



can hide them; she speaks a saint, and lives a sinner.



C H A P. XIII.

*Of the PATIENCE of WOMEN.*

**W**E must not suffer ourselves to be overcome with grief any more than with pleasure; moderation is required for the one, and patience for the other.

If some women give themselves up to sorrow instead of resisting it, it is not by way of mortification but through despair. They indulge it not out of virtue but stubbornness. It is a strange disorder to see how an excess of joy is forbidden while an excess of sorrow is allow'd. There seems less shame in despair than in voluptuousness; the least irregular motions of joy must be restrain'd, while the extravagancies of sorrow are permitted. All the world cries out against a woman drowned in her pleasures, but none against those that are drowned in their tears\*.

\* — Est quædam flere voluptas.

Ovid. de Trist. lib. iv.

Dulcibus indulget lacrymis, aperitque dolorem.

Val. Flacc. lib. iii.

Grief dresses itself up no less than joy. It is full of inconsistencies and caprice: *Æsop* had reason to say, that when *Jupiter* was distributing honours to the gods, Grief presented herself, to whom was given for her share parade and equipage, that she might the better expose her complaints and afflictions. As the poet saith, *There is sometimes a pleasure in weeping*, we may likewise say, there is often much vanity. Fancy joins itself with sorrow; it is she that causeth such storms on this sea; it is she that swells the eyes with tears; and heaves the bosom with sob and sighs.

I know not in all antiquity a more proper example for women than what *Seneca* makes use of when he would comfort *Marcia* after the death of her son. He sets before her two *Roman* ladies quite opposite to each other, that she might choose one for imitation. These two ladies were the sister and the wife of *Augustus*; they had each of them suffer'd a very great loss, *Octavia* in the death of her son *Marcellus*, and *Livia* in the death of *Drusus*; but with this difference that *Octavia* would not be comforted, but rejected every thing that could be propos'd to her for the remedying her grief; while *Livia* evidenced more strength of mind, in listening to those who spoke of the glory of her son, and attending to the intreaties of her friends; and yet her loss

was

was not less than *Octavia's*, forasmuch as *Drusus* had those perfections which were only expected in *Marcellus*. Is it not better to resemble *Livia* than *Octavia*? Is it not more profitable and more commendable to suffer ourselves to be pacified, than to be stubborn in affliction?

And indeed ought we not to do all we can to drive away an enemy who seeks nothing less than to destroy us? Of what use is grief, either to those that mourn or that are the cause of it? It is not enough to permit it to go away of itself; it must be driven away without our waiting its departure. But why is it detain'd? As if it were a weakness to yield to the persuasions of those who would fair comfort us; when it would go away it finds great difficulty in taking leave; we fondly embrace it, we are jealous of it, and are afraid it should escape.

I am not surpris'd to see the pains we take to detain pleasure, because it is a fair enemy that attacks us; not but with agreeable arms, and whose wounds are not less delightful than mortal; but I cannot find what sort of chains they are that bind us to grief. I cannot see any charms or allurements in it; nor can I conceive why we are so fond of it, and are never satisfied with its bitterness. I cannot see what it is that seduces us except it be fancy and customs  
there

there seems to be no other source of such a flood of tears, nor other cause of such deep lamentations.

I cannot read without astonishment the history of *Jane* queen of *Castile* and daughter of *Ferdinand* and *Isabella*; this miserable princess having lost her husband, conceiv'd such a distaste of every thing that she was quite inconsolable. She would not stir out but in the night, nor at any time enjoy the light of the sun; but lived altogether by the light of flambeaux or the stars; not desirous to see any thing whatever but what had a melancholy cast to entertain her grief. How strangely tragical is grief! when she enter'd into the church, and had placed herself near the body of *Philip*, she would not suffer any other woman to approach: And that nothing might be wanting to her sorrow, she mourn'd not only this so great a loss, but added jealousy thereto, as if she had not yet lost him.

The great cardinal *Ximenes* did all that was in his power to prevail on her to change her manner of living, and to consider what unnecessary trouble she created to herself and the whole court: But she continued stubborn in her dismal design, and indulg'd a grief, which we might well call the most extravagant and troublesom that ever was. This lady then is the true portrait of those who suffer themselves to be carried away with sorrow instead of striving

ing against it; who love sorrow, and do all, they can to maintain it; who are desirous to have the object of their grief always before their eyes, that the spring of their tears may not be dried up; and will not take the dagger out of the wound lest it should close: They glory in being invincible to reason but not to grief; it seems a weakness to yield to any persuasions or prayers.

I own that grief may be just, and the subject of our affliction sometimes so noble that the very signs of it are glorious: But whatever is the cause, there can be no reason to love it, unless it be when it produceth a just repentance, or is the effect of christian penitence; unless, I say, it serves to correct or punish us; and not when it only disquiets us, and is prejudicial. I should not blame women if they indulg'd their grief but as *Mary Magdalene* did hers; this is too fair a spring of tears to wish it dry. But it is to be fear'd, that the grief of many is contrary to that of this saint, and that they give not themselves so much trouble by way of repentance like her. It is to be feared that their patience would be criminal, and their courage no less culpable than their faint-heartedness. They sometimes employ it very improperly, and are only patient while they are infected with some strong passion.

VOL. II.

K

They

They do as *Hippia* \* did, who commonly complained of being sick while at home; but was well enough, and strong to follow her gallant into a strange country. "It was her custom before, says *Juvenal*, to lie delicately on a soft couch, and yet she complain'd not of lying hard upon deck, like the common seamen; she who had been used to nothing but the sweetest odours in the place of her birth, can now snuff up the smell of pitch as if it were ambergreese. Her bad design strengthens the delicacy of her nature; and she who  
before

\* Thus *Hippia* loath'd her old patrician lord,  
And left him for a brother of the sword:  
To wandering *Pharos* with her love she fled,  
To shew one monster more than *Afric* bred:  
Forgetting house and husband, left behind,  
Ev'n children too; she sails before the wind;  
False to them all, but constant to her kind.  
Born of rich parentage, and nicely bred,  
She lodg'd on down, and in a damask bed;  
Yet daring now the dangers of the deep,  
On a hard mattress is content to sleep.  
Ere this, 'tis true, she did her shame expose;  
But that, great ladies with great ease can lose.  
The tender nymph cou'd the rude ocean bear,  
So much her love was stronger than her fear.  
But had some honest cause her passage press'd,  
The smallest hardships had disturb'd her breast.  
Were she to follow her own lord to sea,  
What doubts and scruples would she raise to stay?  
Her stomach sick, and her head giddy grows;  
The tar and pitch are nauseous to her nose.

But

“ before was afraid of the least danger, re-  
 “ gards not the boisterous waves, and thinks  
 “ it no trouble to handle the ropes, or work  
 “ at the oar.”

“ Had this voyage, adds the poet, been  
 “ made in the company of her husband instead  
 “ of a galant ; alas ! how would she have been  
 “ afflicted with the head-ach, and all manner of  
 “ painful disorders ; how uneasy would have  
 “ been the hammock, and how terrible the  
 “ face of the sea ! A storm would have  
 “ frighten'd her almost to death. But as the  
 “ voyage was undertaken unjustly, nothing  
 “ can be more agreeable ; she makes no com-  
 “ plaint at all of her sufferings, since it is upon  
 “ an infamous account. Her passion gives her  
 “ patience.”

But in love's voyage nothing can offend ;  
 Women are never sea-sick with a friend.  
 Amidst the crew she walks upon the board,  
 She eats, she drinks, she handles every cord ;  
 And if she spew, 'tis thinking of her lord.

Now ask, for whom her friends and fame she lost ?  
 What youth, what beauty cou'd the adulterer boast ?  
 The galant, of his days had seen the best :  
 Deep scars were seen indented on his breast ;  
 And all his batter'd limbs requir'd their needful rest.  
 A promontory wen, with griev'd grace,  
 Stood high upon the handle of his face :  
 His blear eyes ran in gutters to his chin :  
 His beard was stubble, and his cheeks were thin.  
 But 'twas his fencing that her fancy mov'd ;  
 'Twas arms and blood and cruelty she lov'd.

*Dryden's Juvenal, Sat. vi.*

However let us see what makes her so resolute and courageous; she leaves a senator to follow a gladiator; from the wife of a nobleman she becomes the mistress of a stage-player; she prefers a *Sergiolus* to a *Fabricius*. The pleasantness of the country she forsook; the cries of her children whom she abandon'd, the love of her husband whom she betray'd, could not restrain her; she broke all her bonds, to follow a man who deserv'd nothing but contempt. He was crooked, blear-eyed, and of a mean aspect; but it was enough to please her, that he was a prize-fighter, nay he was a soldier too, which name alone was enough to make her love him; and tho' he was as ugly as a satyr, she thought him as handsom as the poet's *Hyacinthus*, who was belov'd and bewail'd by *Apollo* \*. This then is what rendered *Hippia* so brave and resolute. Never was there a more shameful patience than hers; if yet we may give the name of a virtue to such a brutal resolution. — It is to be feared that some are like her, who cannot endure any trouble or affliction, but when it is on the account of some vicious undertaking. It is to be feared they would tremble like her were they to suffer any thing for religion or reason; but would shew too much hardness and patience to carry on an unjust design or a scandalous intrigue.

\* Ovid. *Met.* lib. x. ver. 162.



· If a heathen writer employ'd a whole satire against those who shew themselves extremely tender and delicate when they are to suffer any thing for virtue, but are strong and hardy in vice; what shall we christians say of those who are guilty of this crime? Deserve they not a more rigorous punishment? or shall patience and resolution be held in a higher degree in the days of error than in the days of truth?

· I know no stronger argument to confound us than this, nothing more powerful to oblige us to the practice of every moral virtue, than to set forth that of the heathens, and to shew how far we fall short of them therein, notwithstanding the great privileges and advantages we enjoy. The better to judge of this, let us consider how far the patience of the heathens extended. *Virtue, saith Seneca, grows rusty, as it were, if it be not persecuted. Affliction is the furnace that purifies it; it is the wind that by shaking it makes it strike a deeper root. We could never judge what we are if we never tasted affliction; it is this alone that gives us a true knowledge of ourselves.*

Thus speaks this philosopher; but he goes further, and treats of this virtue in a manner that is quite astonishing. God, saith he, exerciseth good men with sufferings to increase their strength; the pains that he inflicts are the marks of his love; he treats us not with the tenderness of a mother, who strokes and caresses her children; but

*with the generous severity of a father, who makes trial of them by hardships and exercise\*. Nor is it only a sign of his affection, but of his good opinion of us; when he proportions the evil to our strength, and sends not adversity but to those whose constancy he knows can bear it. He exerciseth us, as a fencing-master does his scholars; he takes the foile in hand against those that have the most strength and dexterity. Thus he tried Mutius with fire, Fabricius with poverty †; Rutilius with banishment ‡; and Socrates with poison.*

He rises still higher, and saith, *that was Jupiter to look down upon the earth he could not behold a more glorious fight than a good man retaining his integrity under a weight of woes, and combating with courage his bad fortune. This is a fight indeed worthy of God ‖. What excellent words are these! How far do they seem above the thoughts of an heathen! Would we not think that he borrow'd them from the holy scriptures, where it is often said that God afflicteth his children \*\*; and that the Lord, in*

\* *M. Scævola*, who having design'd to kill *Porfenna* king of *Hetruria*, and mistook one of his lords for him, burnt his right hand in the king's presence.

† A nobleman of *Rome*, but so poor that his daughters portions were paid out of the public treasury: Yet was he proof against all manner of bribes and corruption.

‡ He was banish'd by *Sylla*; and would not return when recall'd.

‖ See *Stillington's* Orig. Sacre, lib. iii. cap. 3.

\*\* Prov. iii. 11, 12. Job v. 17. 1 Thess. iii. 3. 2 Tim. iii. 11. iv. 5. Heb. xii. 6. Rev. iii. 19.

giving

giving them thorns and bitterness, makes them partakers of his crown and cup \*; that he is faithful, and holdeth the balance in his hand, nor will load us with more affliction *than we are able to bear* †; that in suffering we become a *spectacle to God, to angels, and to men* ‡. If Seneca saith that he tempted the philosophers, we say that he tempted the patriarchs. He permits the devil to attack us, and our neighbour to give us offence, that he may behold our victory, when by patience we soften our neighbour and triumph over our principal enemy.

And yet upon examining the reasoning of Seneca, we shall find that all the patience of an heathen philosopher is very imperfect in comparison of that of the most ignorant christian. We have much stronger aids; the light of grace hath quite another power from that of reason, to induce us to patience. This spiritual unction sweetens all our labours and heals our wounds. We have far other rewards and other promises. Our thoughts of immortality are much clearer than those of the heathens, whose philosophers saw not, like our martyrs, the heavens open'd ||, and a crown in the hand of God to encourage and reward his servants.

\* Matth. xx. 23.

† 1 Cor. i. 9. x. 13. 1 Thess. v. 24. 2 Thess. iii. 3.

‡ 1 Cor. iv. 9.

|| Acts vii. 56.

But did I say to encourage them? Yet more, he himself is their companion and fellow-sufferer. Such then is the advantage of christianity, when in the exercise of patience we have not only God for a spectator, but for an example, a comforter, a companion, and reward. Of what great importance is this point to christians! The God of the heathens regards them not but from heaven; but ours descends with us into dungeons, in tortures, and in the shades below. When *Marc Antony* was besieged by *Cæsar*, and in great despair, *Plutarch* tells us\*, “that at the dead of night was  
 “ heard the sound of all manner of instruments,  
 “ and a horrible noise like to that which is  
 “ made at the feasts of *Bacchus*; which was in-  
 “ terpreted by those who pretended to under-  
 “ stand prodigies, to signify, that *Bacchus* the  
 “ god whom *Antony* had particularly worship-  
 “ ped, and whom he studied to imitate, had  
 “ now forsaken him.” The God of christians forsakes them not in such manner; he leaves us not in afflictions, but only in riotous pleasures; he abandons not the wretched but the guilty. *Bacchus* left *Antony* in this extremity, as we have said elsewhere, *Venus* left the siege of *Troy* when she was wounded. Such is the assistance the heathens receiv’d from their gods and goddesses. This *Roman’s* god accompanied him not but at feasts, and the goddess of the *Greeks’*

\* In his life of *Antony*.

warred no longer for them than they were superior to the *Trojans*.

But further, these false gods were no fitter to instruct than to succour them. What examples do they give for patience? As learned and virtuous as they paint their *Pallas*, they still make her impatient and outrageous; they give her a shuttle in her hand to strike *Arachne* with, and to drive her by the affront to hang herself\*. *Diana* with her own hands slew the children of *Niobe*†; and *Latona* changed the peasants into frogs‡: How then should the heathen women be patient, when the goddesses whom they serv'd were not so? After such examples, could they make any scruple of being vitious? Was not their licentiousness authorised by the sinful pattern of their gods?

It is true then that the heathens had not the like motives for practising this virtue as we have; and if any extraordinary example of it has been found among them, this only renders us the more culpable. It would be strange if the vanity of the heathens should be more patient than the charity of christians: It would be monstrous to see that grace with reason could not do more than mere reason alone; and nothing sure can make us blush more for our faults than to see the perfection of infidels. Their

\* Ovid. Met. lib. v. ver. 133.

† Ovid. lib. vi. ver. 288.

‡ Ovid. lib. vi. ver. 370.

patience could not arise but from four causes ; from constitution, vanity, necessity, or reason : That from constitution is disgraceful ; that which comes from vanity is mercenary ; that which comes from necessity is too much constrain'd to be of any value ; and that which comes from reason alone is commendable indeed, but not perfect enough without the aid of grace.

This is that divine assistance which was wanting to the virtue of the heathens, and which God hath vouchsafed to us to accomplish ours. This is that holy buckler which renders our better part invulnerable. Without grace patience is melancholy : Reason alone cannot fortify it entirely. Let us only look on the countenances of those who have been most renowned for courage ; behold *Lucretia* with a dagger in her hand, and *Portia* \* with coals of fire in her mouth, how desperate they look ! On the contrary, christian patience hath a smiling countenance in the midst of the severest afflictions, by reason of the inward consolation that animates it. It hath a certain sweetness which throws out its rays even when under torture. Let us consider the beautiful picture which *Tertullian* hath drawn of her in the form of a woman, whom hope incites to lift up her eyes to heaven, without any appearance of presump-

\* The daughter of *Cato*, the widow of *Bibulus*, married to *Brutus*. See *Plutarch* in the life of *Brutus*.

tion; and whom humility obliges again to cast them down without the least sign of despair †.

Perseverance and chearfulness are two infallible signs of true patience, which remains unshaken, without hardening itself too much or being excessively tender. I no more approve of *Aretbusa* \*, who was changed into a fountain, than of *Niobe* who was turn'd into marble. These are shameful metamorphoses, and unworthy the constancy of a christian: We must own then, that without grace the strongest minds are apt to relax and be terrified; but with it the more mean and simple do miracles with regard to this virtue. And especially, as to perseverance, I shall recite an example, which is almost incredible, and in the description whereof, St. *Hierom* seems, in the opinion of many, to have strained the point too far.

“ A woman, says he, of great wisdom was  
 “ accused of adultery in the city of *Versailles*.  
 “ The young man, who was charged with be-  
 “ ing her paramour, confess'd himself guilty.  
 “ He acknowledg'd a sin which he had not  
 “ committed, and thinking to avoid the punish-  
 “ ment due to one crime, he made himself  
 “ guilty of three, cowardise, lying, and mur-  
 “ der. The lady on the other hand was very  
 “ resolute, she confess'd nothing, but her

† De patientiâ, §. 15.

\* Ovid. Met. lib. v. ver. 564;

“ silence was not owing to any apprehension  
 “ of death, but to the fear of a lye: She was  
 “ not afraid of death but of infamy; it was  
 “ not to preserve her life, but what was dearer  
 “ to her, her reputation; she dreaded not pain  
 “ so much as the character of an adulteress;  
 “ she undergoes the torture both of fire and  
 “ water; the executioner himself is dreadfully  
 “ amaz’d; he has less cruelty than she con-  
 “ stancy; she is handled in such a manner,  
 “ that there is scarce any place in her body for  
 “ a fresh wound; he knew not where to  
 “ strike but on a sore place.

“ To add terror after pain, the young man  
 “ is slain before her face, but all in vain; this  
 “ dreadful spectacle moves her not; she is still  
 “ as courageous as she was chaste; and as she  
 “ scorn’d to yield to the charms of pleasure,  
 “ she will not stoop to the menaces of torment.  
 “ Yet more, the rage of her enemies still con-  
 “ tinues as well as her resolution and patience;  
 “ she is condemn’d, and the executioner struck  
 “ her four times without effecting his purpose;  
 “ at the first blow he only raised the skin, and  
 “ drew no more blood than from a slight  
 “ scratch.

“ The executioner quite confounded at the  
 “ strangeness of this affair knows not what to  
 “ do; he prepares for a second stroke with all  
 “ his art and strength, but it succeeds no  
 “ better than the former; it seems as if he had  
 “ struck



“ struck an image of brass with a leaden sword.  
“ He is quite enraged, and gives her a third  
“ blow to as little purpose: Transported with  
“ fury he then endeavoured to plunge the  
“ sword into her bosom; but it bent to the  
“ very hilts, nor could he hurt her either with  
“ the point or edge. Great was the astonish-  
“ ment of the spectators; the executioner  
“ withdraws, and another takes his place with  
“ a promise to do better.

“ He struck her three times; the first blow  
“ made her tremble, the second wounded her,  
“ and the third laid her upon the ground. It  
“ was thought she was dead, but she was only  
“ in a swoon; for as they were preparing her  
“ for burial, her friends observ'd some signs  
“ of life in her, and applied proper remedies  
“ to save her, which they at length did with  
“ all imaginable secrecy to prevent her invete-  
“ rate enemies from retaking her”.

The epistle of St. *Hierom* on this subject is very eloquent; the constancy of this woman animates his stile, and he gives her no other name than of the *woman who was smote seven times with the sword of the executioner without being wounded unto death*. Every stroke was enough to take away her life, and we may say that if God work'd a great miracle in preserving her life, he yet did more in preserving her courage. Her body was not so much put to  
the

the trial as her patience ; and I am more amazed at seeing her unshaken than unslain.

True perseverance is a christian virtue ; the heathens sometimes slew themselves for fear of suffering. Their death was not so much a sign of their courage as of their fear and impatience : As some suffer much for fear of dying, others die for fear of suffering. If the desire of life makes us endure many evils, the dread of suffering makes us wish an end of life. Death and pain seem a remedy for each other.

True patience ought to persevere as long as the evils which are the objects of it last : But alas ! of how short duration is that of many women ! they at first complain, and immediately despond : They know not that God hath a particular hour wherein it pleaseth him to help us. When the heathens themselves could say, that *God took delight in seeing good men bear up under sufferings*, we ought not to wonder that he should wait some time, and not send us aid as soon as we pour out our complaints. As the stars appear brightest in winter-nights, the grace of God displays itself most in the greatest extremity ; this is his hour, for was he to come to our assistance as soon as called, we should never suffer at all ; because our impatience begins the same moment with our sufferings,

I would to God that all who sink under their misfortunes as soon as they are attack'd, would set

set before them for their encouragement the example of the constant and chaste *Susanna*, when she was persecuted by the two elders. How steady was her patience ! over how many enemies did she triumph ! she withstood persuasion, intreaties, presents, threatnings ; nay, she equally despised life and death ; the hopes of living or fear of dying could not move her. She is troubled, she is accused and condemn'd ; she is carried to the place of punishment, and the executioner hath lift up his arm to smite off her head. Alas ! how great her extremity ! how long did heaven withhold its aid ! might it not be said that she was forsaken ? And yet this was the hour that God chose to make her patience the more glorious, the more it had been tried.

He suffers likewise one of the greatest patriarchs, and whom he loved, to come to the very point of sacrificing his only son \* ; after he had promised him, that the posterity of this son should be as the stars in heaven for multitude, and particularly blessed in their race. He is not satisfied with *Abraham's* leaving his house in obedience to his command ; he does not bid him return, nor shew him any other victim when the altar was prepared ; he stays till the child was laid upon the wood, and the knife lift up in his father's hand to slay him. This was the hour of extremity.

\* Gen. xxii.

And lastly, this is the hour which he so delights in, that the *Virgin* herself having pray'd our Lord to work a miracle at the marriage in *Cana of Galilee*, in favour of those who had so handsomly treated him, he said, *His hour was not yet come*. And as if the virgin had been too hasty in her request, and that her holy impatience had made her pray for something at an improper time, instead of calling her mother, he accosted her with the common appellation of woman \*. Many women indeed are too hasty in this respect, and wait not the pleasure of God in their suffering, nay they sometimes complain before it happens.

Now, this their impatience ariseth from three sources equally bad, too much delicacy, incredulity, or ignorance; from too much delicacy, when not being used to suffer, the very first afflictions that attack them quite overcome them; from incredulity, because, if they rightly believed that God takes a pleasure in seeing them suffer patiently, and that it is he himself who tempts them by way of probation, and would not that they should sink under their misfortunes, without doubt they would endeavour to satisfy him and acquire greater glory to themselves; from ignorance, because, not knowing wherein adversity may be profitable for them,

\* John ii. 4. This appellation however, with the Author's leave, might not be any sign of disrespect. John xix. 26. See bishop *Pearce* against *Woolston*.

they

they are terrified at the first onset, and consider not that the bitterness of afflictions may sometimes have as salutary an use as that of medicines.

Provided we have a little constancy, affliction purifies as well as tries us. *Plutarch* \* tells us, that formerly in *Carystia*, there was a quarry of soft stones which they used to spin and draw into thread, like flax or cotton, and to make napkins and kerchiefs thereof, which to whiten or clean when soiled, they flung into the fire. Affliction and pain have the same good quality, in those who have patience, when it mollifies the stubborn and purifies the lewd. Strange as it may seem to make cloth of stone, it is no less surprising to see the most ambitious and hardened heart render'd supple and obedient, after some malady or severe affliction. Indeed we know not the merit of patience, when we constantly fly the opportunity of shewing it: And as we may justly say of the soldier, who receives the call to battle with regret, that he is a coward; so we may say, the christian who is quite cast down at the thoughts of suffering, hath by no means true patience.

This virtue then is exercised in the greatest accidents, but it ought not however to be neglected in the smallest. It acts not always upon the stage or in the sight of the world. There are subjects wherein it displays itself without

\* In his dissertation on oracles.

spectators,

spectators, but not without glory. It shines no less sometimes in the abuses of our friends than in the injuries of our enemies. And so much may be caused by another's imperfections, as to place us in the rank of martyrs, tho' no blood be shed under the hand of an executioner.

And yet there is scarce any virtue so rare as this. There are women who find it more difficult to bear with those who have merit, than with those who have none; they are at more pains to help being envious than disdainful. When we praise any one, however justly, they think it is robbing them of their due. This then is the source of the first disorder; we cannot endure the defects of others, because we are ignorant of our own; so that to know our own imperfections, and to bear with those of others, seems but an effect of the same cause. To suffer the injuries of another, we need only courage; but to suffer his defects, we must thoroughly know ourselves.

Were we to add a christian to a moral reason, we should find yet a more noble source of patience. It comes from charity among christians, as from decency among the philosophers; and granting that it is not the knowledge of our imperfections, which makes us patient with regard to those of others; yet we ought not the less to bear with the defects of our neighbours. If we have many blemishes  
ourselves,

ourselves, we ought to endure those of others, on account of the resemblance; if we have none, we ought to bear with them so much the more, because God hath been pleased to exempt us from them; we ought, always, I say, to bear with them, either from justice or knowledge.

We ought charitably to bear with all the world, as much as lies in our power. The angels adapt themselves to us; tho' they have wings, which they use in heaven, they walk with men on earth as if they had none; so the most perfect women ought to employ this holy complaisance. Tho' they may sometimes raise themselves up with the contemplative, they must not be ashamed of lowering themselves to the pitch of the more dull and simple. Lastly, whatever sort of patience they want, they need not look for examples but in their own sex. Are their husbands wanting in fidelity towards them, let them regulate their conduct by that of *Octavia* to *Marc Antony*; are they quite worthless, let them imitate the modesty of *Abigail* to *Nabal*; are they ill-natured, let them follow *Monica* the mother of *St. Austin*.





## C H A P. XIV.

*The SCANDALOUS and OFFENSIVE.*

**S**OME great writers have taught, that bashfulness is not a virtue, but only a commendable quality; that it is not voluntary, but only a sudden emotion in the interior part, which often in spite of us shews itself upon the visage. They say that it is contrary to perfection; and that he, who is perfect from an habit of virtue, is no more capable of dreading infamy than of doing such actions as deserve it.

On this account they add, that there are three sorts of persons exempt from bashfulness, the old, the virtuous, and the wicked; the wicked, because they feel no sting within, when the habit of evil hath taken from them all manner of tenderness and remorse; the virtuous and the old, because they know assuredly that there is nothing in their actions that deserves either shame or infamy; and they look upon disgrace as an evil easily to be avoided by persons who do nothing to deserve it. These then seem the foundations of their opinion, which I think it not very difficult to overthrow.

It is easy to shew that bashfulness is not only a commendable quality but a moral virtue.

As



As an habit of boldness is attainable, why not an habit of modesty? We may use ourselves to fear as well as to be bold. If by degrees a sense of shame is lost through persuasions and assurances, why may it not be acquired by continual alarms? Were bashfulness not a virtue of itself, it may become so by means of prudence, which may make a voluntary habit of a sudden emotion.

Thus it is said that anger may change into zeal, and that which of itself is only a passion, may become a moral, nay even a christian virtue. And why may we not say of bashfulness what is said of courage, which of itself is only a passion, but may likewise become a virtue by the conduct of prudence? Tho' it be a sudden motion from goodness, cannot I afterwards give my consent thereto? Thus bashfulness may be called a virtue, when it is voluntary and become habitual, and when it is placed in a proper mean, by the prudence that regulates it. Accordingly *Aristotle* makes it a moral virtue, placing it between two extremes as the other virtues.

And as to the old and virtuous not being subject thereto, because they are not guilty of any thing worthy of infamy, and which they look upon as what may easily be avoided, I think we may alledge the contrary. We ought not only to fear the disgrace which may happen to us by our own fault, but even that which happens by misfortune. The fear of losing

ing reputation is inseparable from wisdom. Fear is necessary to salvation \*: The edifice of christianity is quite contrary to all other ; it stands or subsists not but upon a foundation that shakes continually : A too great assurance comes from too good an opinion of ourselves.

But laying aside here christian arguments, I shall only make use of moral and natural. Look we therefore into *Seneca* to see, whether old and good men are not subject to bashfulness. “ It shines strongest indeed, says he †, “ in young men, but the wise and aged are “ not free from it, tho’ they have discarded all “ vice and passion. There are those who sweat “ and tremble when they speak in public ; and “ yet a good orator is not less assured of his “ discourse than an old man of his actions. “ And as to the vicious, *Sylla* was never more “ violent than when he reddened ; because after “ that, he seems to have discharged all shame, “ and all his fear was extinguish’d with the “ colour of his face. It happens also to the “ virtuous, as was seen in *Pompey*, who blush’d “ every moment ; and *Fabianus* shew’d an “ extraordinary bashfulness in full senate, only “ at being called upon to give his evidence, “ tho’ he was not at all interested in the case. “ It was not the want of resolution, but the

\* Timor fundamentum salutis est ; præsumptio impedimentum timoris. Tertul. de Cultu Fœm. lib. ii.

† Epist. ii.

“ novelty of the affair that made him blush.  
 “ It is not in the power of wisdom to prevent  
 “ it, any more than 'tis to raise it.” This reasoning more particularly concerns those women who seem too bashful, and have too much reason to think that it is not a virtue; their bashfulness being founded on the natural repugnancy they have to evil, and upon the desire they have to preserve their reputation. They blush not only at being condemn'd, but at being accused or even suspected.

*You ought not, says St. Hierom writing to a lady, to content yourself with the testimony of your own conscience, but to seek that of the world.* But why? they will say; what necessity is there to please men? What avails their judgment when our only care ought to be to please God, who oftentimes approves our thoughts when men condemn the outward carriage and appearance? *Tertullian* \* forbids them to talk in this manner, and advises them to follow the doctrine of the apostle, who directs us to *please our neighbour for his good to edification*, that he may praise God, and approve of our conversation, *having no manner of evil thing to say of us.* And how shall any one preserve her reputation, if she is under no fear of losing it? Undoubtedly, if the fear of pain is necessary for keeping it off, the fear of disgrace is no less necessary for the avoiding any reflections of this kind.

\* De Cultu Fœm. lib. ii. Rom. xv. 2. 2 Cor. viii. 21. Tit. ii. 8.

As, many are more afraid of being guilty than of being punished ; so, many are more afraid of infamy than of being vicious. They are more apprehensive of punishment than of the crime : Bashfulness therefore is of great use to them, seeing that the dread of being blamed prevents them from being guilty. This is but too common a disorder. As we generally love praise better than virtue, so we are more afraid of reproach than of deserving it. And many likewise own that bashfulness has not so much respect to sin, as to the disgrace which is the punishment of it.

It not only hinders women from doing ill, but from inciting others thereto. And here I intend to oppose all such as take pleasure in giving offence to others, and yet boast themselves innocent. If they offend not chastity, they offend against charity : And if sometimes they provoke love without accepting it, they have no more reason to boast, than one who hath committed murder, in not being wounded. We cannot make our neighbour fall without being partakers of his guilt.

The fear of giving offence hath been so great in some women, that to prevent it they have plucked out their eyes. But no such severity is required in our age : Let them not destroy any natural gifts, but lay aside art and affectation. They have no occasion to pull out their eyes, but only to regulate their glances.

Yet

Yet after all they are chaste, they say : And what chastity can there be in the soul of a person who would fain ravish that of others ? If they loved this virtue, they would give it no disturbance. The arrows however of love often recoil upon those who let them fly ; the aspects as well as the rays of the sun grow hot by reflexion. This would only be a light without heat, but the objects sometimes kindle it in sending it back upon itself : They at length feel themselves what they designed for others ; and it sometimes happens, that they who endeavour to inspire persons of merit with love, have fell in love themselves with the most worthless. But why, they will say, is simple vanity so great an evil ? The fair can no more help pleasing than the sun his giving light. It is true this may be done very innocently where the design is just ; but where it is not so, it is excessively criminal.

I have often wonder'd, why of all the women whose conversion is spoken of in scripture the name of *a sinner* is particularly given to *Mary Magdalene* \* ; seeing also that, in the opinion of many of the fathers, her greatest crime was the study of inciting love, and making herself agreeable to several galants at the same time. They think that in fact she was not guilty of any thing more than appear-

\* Luke vii. 37.

ing beautiful ; but that this was enough to deserve the title of a *sinner*, because she made others sin, and herein gave great offence ; so that one of them said, she was not only a *sinner*, but *the sin of the whole city*. And yet to see her weeping night and day in a grotto, and passing many years in austerity and fastings ; to see in what manner she threw aside her jewels and neglected her beauty, can any one think she was guilty of nothing else but a desire to please ? If this fault required so great penitence, what will they say who resemble her ? These are the innocents of our age ; these a great part of the most fashionable ; such the exercise of many women, and such their sport and pastime.

What greater evil can they be guilty of than causing a passion, which often occasions folly, rage, and murder ? May they not as well use poison ? It is of little importance what weapons they employ who commit murder ; what matters it whether they kill with a sword or a single glance of the eye. Look upon *Marc Antony* in his follies ; examine well the vile and mean actions he committed when he became amorous of *Cleopatra*, so far as cowardly to fly when there were hopes of victory, and even to slay himself. May we not justly say, that he had no greater enemy in the world than

than *Cleopatra*, and that the giving himself up to the love of her, was the principal cause of his ruin? Look we on other amorists, and consider their complaints, their watchings, their anxiety, their chagrin, their transports, and their despair; and do we not see, that they who inspire them with successful love are the cause of the greatest evils that can happen to them? “Ye dress up yourselves, says “*Tertullian*, speaking to the offensive, by “way of temptation; I ask not where is “the chastity of a woman, but where is at “least the charity of a christian; ye weep to “see any one bleeding, and the least wound “of the body incites your compassion, and “have you none for those of the soul? But “especially for those yourselves have given? “Scarce ever was murder more blameable “than yours in infecting the soul of another “with vitious love. If ye were chaste, ye “would have modesty; if you were charitable, ye would at least have pity: But “ye are not less impudent than cruel.

“Ye say, that you have no design of doing evil; but this is not enough; ye ought also to prevent it. If ye really had as great an aversion for vice as ye ought to have, ye would be more afraid of making others commit it. Why should not offences of this kind be punishable, as well

“ as murders committed without design ? ” — But without doubt they design to offend, when they intend to inspire love ; the one is connected with the other ; and if they did not think it an evil, they would not be ashamed to own themselves infected with it. They intend at least to create torment, if not sin ; and as little as they have seen of the effects of this passion, without doubt they intend to disturb the tranquillity of the mind, if not to injure innocence.

And here I beg they would a little turn their minds to consider, when they make numbers guilty, how many it was in their power to prevent from being so, had they been endowed with true modesty and the fear of scandal ; especially those women, to whom God hath given any advantages in body or mind, ought to consider that they have not receiv'd good to do evil withal. In their desire of pleasing they would make many quit vice, if they testified their aversion thereto ; if they shew'd more concern for merit, they would oblige men to acquire it, in order to gain their approbation and esteem.

Certainly it is in the power of women greatly to advance the good morals of men, since it is the study of most of them to please the fair sex : The stronger inclination women shew to virtue, the more would it be in practice with men.



men. In the last century it was observ'd, that no method could be found to cure a certain city in *Spain* of dissoluteness but by having recourse to the women, who no sooner began to testify their affection for the public good, than the young men began insensibly to reform. And in the history of *France* 'tis remarked, that the modesty of a young damsel made a complete convert of *Charles VII.*

And if women ought to be cautious of giving offence by their behaviour, they ought to be more particularly so with regard to their family. *Is it to be expected, says Juvenal, that Larga's \* daughter should be better than what she is after seeing so bad an example? How should she be chaste, whom her mother employ'd in writing billet-doux, and whom she made her confidant in the vilest intrigues?* Thus, instead of preventing the effects of a bad disposition, some mothers rather promote them by their own bad example. Nor are they guilty of this crime only towards their children, but likewise towards their servants. Nothing can be of worse consequence than thus to give offence to the younger sort, who more commonly imitate a bad than a virtuous action, because

\* A fictitious name for a common prostitute. *Juv. Sat. xiv. ver. 25.*

their minds are more inclined thereto, nor is their reason yet strong enough to restrain them. As their inclination leads them to evil, example carries them on with violence till all remedies become useless. Nor is this all, besides, that the viciousness of their constitution and a resemblance of humour incline them to imitate their parents before all others, even duty seems to oblige them thereto; and they think that in following their actions they acquit themselves of part at least of that respect and amity which they owe them.

There are some however who, after having given such scandalous offence in their actions to their children, think to correct them by verbal instructions. I should as soon push them down a precipice, and then bid them take care lest they should fall: The hand thrusts them forward, and the voice pulls them back. How ridiculous is such conduct! If the fear of disobeying for a while restrains them in their tender years, scandal by degrees takes root in their minds, and visibly shoots forth as age gives them more liberty. The daughter of an adulteress may be chaste while young; but the effects of bad example soon appear when she is no longer under the restraint of age or shame: And indeed how should it be otherwise? If the storks  
carry

carry serpents to their young, can we wonder at their seeking the same food themselves when they have got wings.

But to come to the greatest and most common source of scandal, and that is hypocrisy. This may seem strange perhaps, because hypocrisy endeavours to hide sin; and there can be no sort of scandal given but where the sin is public. And yet there is no doubt but that the hypocrite sets a worse example than the libertine; for if we measure the greatness of scandal by that of the crime which it is the cause of, in the opinion of all the world malice under disguise is doubly criminal, because it adds to its own sinfulness that of lying. Hypocrisy sows scandal, only that it may gather strength in its concealment; it hides it for a while, only that when it breaks forth it may be the more detrimental.

What if that infamous lady *Magdalene de la Croix*, who deceiv'd all *Spain*, pass'd for a saint a long while? Did it avail her any thing to have a good name between the age of twelve and of thirty, when her vitiousness being discovered she was found to be an hypocrite and a sorceress? She triumph'd indeed in feigned goodness for some years, and had acquired such reputation that the wife of *Charles V.* sent to her the swaddling-clothes of

*Philip II.* in order that she might bless them, and make him happy. But when her infamous practices were found out, and she herself had confess'd all her vicious amours, would it not have been better with regard to her bad character never to have had a good one? Was it not more shameful now to pass for a sinner, who had so long been esteem'd a saint?

Let not any one think that it is enough by concealing her crime to set a good example: This is not to prevent scandal, but only to defer it, and make it greater. There are no women more scandalous than hypocrites, since it is manifest they conceal their loose designs only to give better success to their pernicious effects; since, I say, they hide their sins but to continue in the practice of them with less hindrance, and to do the greater injury to virtue by borrowing its appearance. To make this plainer I shall exemplify it in two *Italians*, the one an hypocrite, the other a libertine.

The courtesan *Flora* is scandalous, but the fair *Julia* much more so. The former was so impudent as to write over her door, *Entertainment for kings, princes, dictators, consuls, priests, and others.* Yet *Julia* was worse, who never appear'd but with great signs of mortification and probity, and was not only  
dishonest

dishonest but impious. As hypocrites therefore set a worse example than libertines, *Julia* was more scandalous than *Flora*; for 'tis not modesty that restrains the hypocrite, but dissimulation: They would fain make a bad life and a good name compatible; but how absurd is their design! They seek not reputation upon any good motive; not through charity but vain-glory; not to edify their neighbour but to deceive him.

From hence it is that when the cheat is discover'd, they cause the greater scandal, because to the sin which they commit they add that of dissimulation. Their reservedness is no more to be esteem'd than the craft of thieves, because all their art terminates in the design of sinning longer unpunish'd. We may say the same of the modesty of hypocrites as of the prudence of the wicked, the end makes them both more culpable; their sin is the greater on account of their attempt to hide it; they are sacrilegious in using sacred means to gain a profane end.

But I have said enough to shew that hypocrites are by no means less scandalous than libertines, because their sin is heighten'd by employing virtue herself to hide it. Having spoken of scandal we shall add something relating to modesty; forasmuch as the love of this gives a stronger aversion to the other.

*Modesty, says Tertullian, is a wall that binds a person from wounding or being wounded by the eyes. It is so necessary to prevent any one from casting or receiving a dangerous glance, he adds, that a woman who finds her neck or head uncover'd, ought to be overwhelm'd with shame: She ought to run to her kerchief or veil, as a seldier to his sword and buckler, when his enemy comes upon him unarm'd.*

Modesty is absolutely necessary to both sexes, but more particularly to the fair; it is the sign and defence of chastity; it is sometimes indeed a passion but may be made a virtue; it may be render'd voluntary by our consent, and tho' at first but a sudden emotion, it may become a moral habit. I repeat this to shew that we may study it, and that it is a quality which may be acquired, and that was it only natural we should neither deserve praise in possessing it nor dispraise in losing it. It is the opinion of all antiquity, that a woman void of shame is in danger of being void of honour; and that were we to paint the picture of all the virtues, we must borrow from modesty their first and brightest colours.

So true is it, that it is not only a virtue, but also a necessary one for the support of all the rest. Great pains therefore ought to be taken in preserving it, and in keeping ourselves

selves from every thing that tends to lead us into insolence and boldness. To this purpose *Seneca's morals* \* are of great use; where  
 “ he adviseth *Lucilius* to do nothing but with  
 “ modesty, and at the same time exhorts  
 “ him to have alway some great personage in  
 “ his thoughts. Choose you, says he, some  
 “ one that is famous, who may be, as it  
 “ were, always present with you in all your  
 “ designs, and as an observer of your actions.  
 “ The way to do nothing shameful is to do  
 “ nothing without a witness. You may  
 “ choose one according to your humour; as  
 “ well as according to your necessity. If  
 “ *Cato* seems too severe for this purpose,  
 “ take *Lelius*. Let it be some one whom  
 “ you can fear without an aversion, and  
 “ who may reprove you without terror.”

Such is the counsel of this philosopher, which may serve for women as well as men. Let them choose some one of their own sex, whom they may suppose always present as a check upon them. Let them continually set before them the life of some excellent lady, either of their own or of former times; let them propose such as are of a noble spirit to correct their foibles, and such as are virtuous to make them ashamed of their sins. Let them always have these fair models before their

\* Epist. ii.

eyes; and without doubt they will dread all manner of transgressing in the sight of such illustrious women, as meditation and recollection can make always present. This advice is no less useful to support the modesty of an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN, than to preserve that of a *Lucilius* or a *Seneca*.



## C H A P. XV.

*Of PASSIONATE WOMEN.*

**T**EMPERANCE must be observ'd in the use of things, as well as prudence in the choice. As it is absolutely forbidden to attach our affections to what does not deserve them, so is it to incline them too strongly even to those things that are worthy of them. The physician who forbids us to eat poison, or what may be hurtful to us, cautions us likewise to avoid excess even in those things that are proper for nourishment. The abuse of good things is unjust as well as the use of bad. This then is the source of all inquietude, and of many crimes. We suffer ourselves to be carried away, and engage ourselves with too much earnestness in almost all the affairs of life.

Women



Women sometimes suffer the natural goodness of their temper to be impos'd upon, and are too passionately fond, not only of what deserves their affection, but of the contrary. Was there ever woman more blind than *Medea* in her love for *Jason*? And yet he made no scruple to abandon her, without any regard to the services she had done for him. How many do we see forsaken like her by those on whom they had conferred the greatest favours! Does not the baseness of those they love seem a just punishment of their imprudence? History furnisheth us with many examples to this purpose, but I choose rather to make use of fable, as it is particularly designed for instruction.

I shall only propose the example of *Ariadne* to all those who have unhappily engaged their affections. What had she not done for *Theseus*? She had left her native country to follow him; she had given him the means of vanquishing the *Minotaur*; she had renounced for him all that was dear to her: And notwithstanding all this he left her upon a desert island, and incurred the guilt not only of ingratitude but cruelty. Thus are women paid for their fondness, especially when it is excessive.

The same may be said of friendship as well as of love; the same of every thing which they

they too much dote upon, as beauty, honours, and riches. These are foreign goods which are not given, but only lent to us; they are borrow'd goods, which we must give up again without complaining. We are like children, who cry when you take any thing from them, that was only given them to play withal for a time. He from whom we hold all things, promis'd not, when he gave them, perpetual enjoyment. He recalls them at his pleasure, and we are obliged to him for every single moment they were in our possession.

This reflexion would draw us off, as it ought, from too great a fondness for pleasures, or any good thing whatever; if we would consider, that there is nothing firm and infallible in this world. Are we not intirely blind in our sentiments, to think we can rest upon a ball, or continue immoveable upon that which is fluctuating incessantly? Whence comes it that our affection is constant for objects that are not so? As we grieve not to leave an inn, where it was not our design to make our abode; why do we not the same by other things, wherein we cannot expect stability without being deceiv'd? Why do we not use this meditation as a sword to cut the bonds that hold us?

Whence comes it that a woman cannot be comforted having receiv'd a loss or some great misfor-

misfortune? What is the reason of her despair? It is because she was too blindly attached, or had too far engaged her affection. When we know that there is no certainty, either in the length of life or friendship, why should we be so much troubled at the death or change of a friend? We enter upon affection as into a labyrinth, from whence we cannot extricate ourselves but with great pain: Not to be bewilder'd in this maze, we ought to know the ways in and out as well as *The-  
saurus*.

What then, must we be without affection? And have no sentiment at all? No; this is not what I advise. I permit love, and only forbid the excess of it; I permit affection, but cannot suffer it to be so stubborn when its object is variable. There is none but God whom we may love without measure; because he is infinite, we have no need to set bounds to our affection. It may be irregular, but cannot be excessive. He is always more amiable than we can love him, and never can be otherwise than what he is. The rivers have a regular course in watering the earth, and if they overflow they ruin the countries instead of being useful to them; but they expand themselves at large in the sea, neither is their bed or greatness measurable. It is the same with our affection; it hath limits and a certain extent with regard

regard to the things of the earth, but when we love God, we cannot give it too much liberty. Great as it may be, or whatever efforts we make to love him, our love will always fall short in answering the greatness of its object : Excepting this, we must be cautious, not only in loving as we ought, but of loving more than we ought to love.

Let not any one think that I would here defend that shameful indifference of courtesans, who have no affection, tho' they profess it to all the world. To be rightly indifferent is not to renounce all interest except our own. What matters it whether we get drunk with our own wine, or with that of others ? Is temperance less violated hereby ? Is it not in like manner to abuse affection, to have none for another person and too much for ourselves ? The indifference of *Narcissus* \* to the nymph *Echo*, and all other beauties, was by no means commendable, when he had too much love for his own shadow. On the contrary, he is at the same time guilty of excess and defect ; when he had too little affection for the objects that deserved it, and too much for his own person.

True mediocrity has regard to the interest of others as well as to our own ; it is not a proper indifference that still retains the love

\* Ovid. Met. lib. iii. ver. 357, 388.

of self. We attach ourselves too much to what affects us, and therefore are in despair upon every little loss. We must wean ourselves in good time from the goods which fortune can take away from us, lest being constrain'd to quit them we resemble the *Israelites*, who left their affections in *Ægypt*, and parted with regret from the land of bondage. We bind ourselves to objects as the ivy to the walls; as we cannot disengage it without breaking its roots or tearing off the leaves, so in separating ourselves from an object we always leave something behind us.

To remedy this evil, we need only regard the nature of what we love; separation surpriseth us only because it is not foreseen: No person bewails the setting of the sun, because we foresaw his absence. Why was *Dido* so surpris'd at the departure of *Æneas*? But because, instead of receiving him as a stranger, she set her affections upon him without knowing whether he had any for her; it was an imperfect contract, where the articles were sign'd but by one party. Let her example be a terror to the imprudent, and teach them, when they love, not blindly to engage themselves too far, without knowing whether the obligation is reciprocal. But granting, however fond we are, that we pay no more affection than we receive; the excess  
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of another does not justify ours, and the fall is not less dangerous because we fall in company.

Let not any one think this reasoning too austere; and that to live in this manner is to give up all to chance, and yield entirely to the uncertainty of events: I only declare that we must make use of the light of our reason, as we do by flambeaux in the night; but we extinguish them, when the light of the sun restores the day. When the will of God is certainly known, we must conform our own thereto; we must submit our conduct to his, and consider that the superfluous care we take prevents not the course of affairs. Our resistance is not less unprofitable than impious. Our grief cannot remedy our evils; on the contrary it makes us more miserable; and sometimes the tempest is calm'd, after some have died with the fear alone of shipwreck.

I would not take away human forecast, but only submit it to divine providence. We may be careful without being greatly troubled: Let us do all that prudence directs to succeed in our designs; let us regard all that is necessary for the accomplishment of our undertaking; but when we have done all that was possible, if the event should prove otherwise than we expected, we must bear it patiently, without shewing ourselves mean and faint-hearted.

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hearted. We must always be prepared for flight when we are attacked by a superior enemy. Let us reflect upon what may happen, and when it comes it will not surprise us. It is shameful to weep for the death or baseness of a friend, as if we imagin'd that he could never cease to love or cease to live.

They say, we are trees bottom upwards, and yet we throw not our roots towards heaven; we bind ourselves to the earth and make all our alliances in a strange country. This is a general misfortune with both sexes, but more particularly with several women, who seem almost always excessive when they love and when they hate; and whose inclinations and aversions are scarce ever moderate. It is on this account that they are oblig'd to be at so much pains to return from their errors when at any time they are hurried away into extremes; but I know not whether women are not herein more worthy of pity than of correction; I know not, I say, whether men have not herein an advantage over them, who seldom are so deeply engaged or so passionately fond of what they affect; since in truth I perceive imperfection on both sides. If women engage themselves too far by reason of their natural tenderness, the affection of men is seldom strong enough by reason of their natural indifference. If the disposition  
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of women errs in excess, that of men errs as much in defect. The moderation of these comes not so often from strength of mind as from want of amity : But be this as it will, not to engage ourselves either more or less than we ought, we must follow the dictates of reason, which shews us the way to regulate our passions, and forbids us to set too great an affection upon objects that are perishable.

The conduct of grace still goes farther than that of reason alone. God himself would have us not too anxiously concern'd with regard to our spiritual advancement : He would have us serve him without testifying a view to interest ; if we have any spirit we ought to be more solicitous to please him than in seeking a reward. How just seems this reasoning to confound those who are passionate with regard to the things of this world ! What shall we say of those women who are more anxious for temporal advancement than even they ought to be for spiritual ? I mean, that having done all we can in the service of God, we ought to wait for such issue as shall please him, and such complacency as he would have us enjoy in following him. We must intirely rely upon his good-will, who exalts or humbles us as he judgeth most necessary.

And if *Martha* gave herself too much trouble in serving *our Lord* himself, what will become



become of those who are wholly taken up with serving the world? If we ought not to be over-anxious with regard to our progress in a devout life; what shall we say of those who are inconsolable and desponding, when fortune hath not given them what she seem'd to promise them, or hath taken away what she had given? What shall we say of *Job's* wife, who was not satisfied with condemning the holy indifference of her husband, but would have made him rebellious against the decrees of God, and who said to him in mockery, that he had nothing more to do but to kiss the hands of his murderer, and bless the power that had made him miserable?

It is true sometimes we follow the will of God, but very seldom with all the liberty and all the obedience that is requisite: We follow him not, he rather draws us after him. We conform to his laws either by resignation or indifference: By resignation we suffer ourselves to be carried along by his ordinances, as the heavens by the *primum mobile*; I mean that we still retain some will of our own, but by truly christian indifference we intirely go by his motions without the least repugnancy. Indifference not only prefers the will of God to ours, as does resignation, but it absolutely yields to him; and by this means all our inclinations disappear before the will of God, as  
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the stars before the sun. - In short we practise resignation after the manner of suffering, and indifference in the way of pleasing him: We suffer ourselves to be carried along by resignation, but walk freely by indifference. This follows as a legitimate child, the other as an hired servant; the one looks upon heaven as an inheritance, the other as a reward.

We may from hence judge that a perfect indifference is altogether a christian virtue. The most reasonable among the heathens were resign'd to their gods, but it was rather through fear than love; they submitted not with the like humility as we do to the guidance of providence. *Niobe* ceased not to blaspheme in her misfortunes, tho' she knew they came from heaven\*; and shewed not less grief at the death of her children, upon knowing they were slain by the hand of a goddess. I know that she was look'd upon by the heathens themselves as one frantic with despair, and that they had women among them of as great constancy as might shame many in our days: But as great strength of mind as the most resolute among them shewed, it was still but an imperfect resignation; so far were they from being capable of that generous indifference, which the perfection of christianity requires. Grace roots up our affections better than rea-

\* Ovid. Met. lib vi. ver. 195.

son alone; if women then, notwithstanding the assistance of both, still give themselves up to excess of passion, we cannot but think them as worthy of blame and punishment as the heathens themselves.



C H A P. XVI.

*Of LUXURY and AVARICE.*

**F**OR the better strengthening this discourse, I shall begin with the sentiment of a lady the most renowned in all antiquity. *Theano*, being ask'd what it was that could make any of her sex more illustrious than others, answer'd, That it was enough for this purpose, *to be a good oeconomist*. Can we find any fault with the counsel of this lady! She applied not herself to the business of her family as some women do who understand nothing else; she composed many very excellent books, and was esteem'd as one of the most generous-spirited and best learned of her time; and yet to acquire the reputation of an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN, she only prescribes *good housewifery*. She acted not like many of our days, who are either too contemplative or not enough so;  
who

who neglect all business if inclin'd to reading ; or who despise all manner of exercise of the mind, if their humour prompts them to take care of their family. Tho' *Theano* lov'd books, she applied not herself less to the decent employ of her sex than to her own particular inclination.

Indeed it seems requisite that women should apply themselves to housewifery by way of business, and to study by way of diversion. This is what falls to their lot in the opinion of *St. Paul* himself, who often recommends to them the care of their families. 'Tis the opinion also of *Aristotle* and other philosophers, who advise that the care of married persons ought to be so divided that the wife should be employ'd in domestic affairs, and the husband with whatever else may concern them. I fancy our ancestors intended hereby to shew, that such employ was most proper for women as would keep them most within doors.

Besides, being given as help-mates to man and not having strength enough to follow much business, they thought good only to employ them in such wherein there seem'd to be the least danger. So *St. Paul* adviseth \* not to shew favour to, or entertain such widows as *wander about from house to house*, and

\* 1 Tim. v. 9-16.

hazard themselves in company, instead of loving the tranquillity of solitude.

AN ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN therefore must not despise any thing that relates to good housewifery ; but she is not however so intirely to give up herself thereto, as to neglect all regard for the instruction of the mind or the government of the passions. Nay, we are certainly more oblig'd to be solicitous for the goods of the mind than those of fortune : But it is to be feared, that many women take the contrary part, and are excessive in their desires of wealth ; it is to be feared they are infected with the shameful passion of avarice.

They have been accused of having a temper naturally avaritious. *Pascbasius* says, " That  
" of all sins there is none which shews so  
" much meanness of spirit as avarice ; and  
" that for this reason it is more commonly  
" found among women and old folks ; yet  
" with this difference, that with regard to  
" men it seldom possesses any but the old,  
" but as to women, it is attach'd to the sex ;  
" so that if men are covetous only in their old  
" age, women are so through their whole  
" life." This indeed is the sentiment of a great writer, but to me it seems contrary to experience and matter of fact ; for the inclination to evil being equal in both sexes, there is no reason to say that women are more in-

clined to avarice than men. But it is more necessary here than in other places to give them advice than praise, and, leaving the accusations of their enemies, to endeavour to instruct rather than to defend them. To this end therefore I would have them consider of how many crimes avarice may be the source. Sacred as well as profane philosophy speaks herein after the same manner; and as St. *Paul* declares\*, that *it is the root of all evil*, *Democritus* says that it is *the metropolitan of all vices*. This perhaps is said of men, but the truth of it may likewise be applied to women. For of what vice are they not capable who are covetous? We have elsewhere described the unhappiness of those who resemble *Procris*, whose chastity was proof against persuasions, but not against bribes.

Nor do I intend here to enlarge upon the stories of *Danaë* or *Atalantè*, to shew that a shower of gold can find its way to the most closely kept, or golden apples stop the nimblest in their flight†. Laying aside these fictions, I shall make use of arguments drawn from reason only, in order to oppose this shameful passion. I beg that women will consider, that the three greatest enemies to chastity are ambition, pleasure, and avarice. Pleasure stifles it, ambition betrays it, but avarice sells it.

\* 1 Tim. vi. 10.

† Ovid. Met. lib. x. ver. 564.

**To** court it to its ruin, ambition sets forth grandeur; pleasure, delights; and avarice, treasures.

Avarice is the most shameful; it is the servant of the other two, it supplies them with maintenance. The better to comprehend this, we must observe with *Plutarch*\*, that there are two sorts of avarice, the one he calls penuriousness, the other intemperance. The former makes us amass wealth with no other view than that of keeping and increasing it; the other bids us get all we can to supply the expences of luxury. This is the more easily cured; because it sometimes gives over of itself, when it hath got wherewithal to satisfy its dissolute desires, whereas the other is never full. Hence those that are penuriously covetous, are more blameable than those that are so through intemperance; because these seem to have some generosity, loving good things only for the use of them, tho' it be with excess. We hate vipers more than lions, because lions live on what they kill, but vipers have no advantage from any murder they chance to commit: Intemperance prevents not others from the enjoyment of good things; but penuriousness seeks them for no other purpose than to deprive others of the use of them.

\* See his treatise on covetousness.

This sort of avarice is like a fair but coquetish mistress, who gives her humble servants all the trouble she can without ever granting their reward. Riches acquired by penurious savings are like the waters of a lake which always continue in the same position : But those which intemperance amasseth are like the waters of the rivers, that are always flowing down, and doing good at least to some countries. This is the reasoning of *Plutarch*, which may serve for both sexes, but particularly for the fair. And I may say, that if the former sort of avarice seems the more gross, that of intemperance seems the more dangerous : And for this reason, the covetous through intemperance almost always join ambition or pleasure to avarice ; this, as I said before, generally maintains the other two ; and as the desire of pleasure and vanity is in many insatiable, that of amassing wealth is so too. Avarice must necessarily often fill her coffers, when ambition and pleasure are continually draining them. This infamous treasurer is at a great deal of pains to supply the expences of these two prodigals. What riches can suffice the ambitious and the dissolute !

Vicious women that are rich and they that are poor, attack chastity different ways : The poor sell it, the rich purchase it ; and such is the shameful trade that avarice drives among  
women



women of different humours and a different fortune. Thus it is that some amass wealth to supply their expences, and others are constrain'd to do it from having been extravagant. Thus it is they sometimes run from one extreme into another, being covetous in order to be prodigal: Lastly, thus it is that some women would not be covetous, were it not that they are either voluptuous or ambitious.

We have elsewhere spoken of the bad effects of voluptuousness, we shall here speak a word or two concerning those of ambition when join'd with avarice. What can be more ridiculous than to see *Pbrynè*, who had been hoarding treasure all her life, offer to expend all her riches in a moment? She gave to the temple of *Venus* a statue of solid gold, with this inscription, *From the intemperance of Greeks*; but not contented with this, she offer'd to rebuild the walls of *Thebes*, that had an hundred gates, provided only this inscription might be set thereon, *Pbrynè* rebuilt what *Alexander* had demolished.

I shall pass by the avarice of the daughter of king *Cleophas*, and her fond desire of building a pyramid with the wealth she had got, that she might publish one sin by another, and leave to posterity the shameful tokens of her ill-spent life: As also of that lady who

express'd such a violent passion for *Vespasian*, when it was manifest that she affected the treasures of that emperor rather than his good graces\*. And likewise the fair *Agnes* in the time of *Charles VII.* who gave no less to the place where she was interr'd than 60000 crowns, to testify the gain she had made of the most infamous trade in the world.

I intend not I say to make use of such examples, however serviceable they might be to give more horror to this shameful passion; tho' I say we might delineate this crime in a discourse that treats of innocence, with the same intention that we sometimes see devils painted in a church. But I am content with attacking *en passant* the avarice which history condemns in some women, in order to oppose that of others, who have not more virtue, but perhaps more cunning and better fortune.

Lastly, I am satisfied with observing that when we have any design of amassing wealth in order to be the more extravagant, we act in this manner against our own resolution. God, for the punishment of the covetous, permits that they should spend in one day what they have been many years scraping together; he permits them to open their hands with great profusion, having long

\* Suetonius, in the life of *Vespasian*, §. 22.

kept

kept them close by the most sordid poverty.

This is what women ought to consider, the better to understand the vile effects of this avarice of intemperance; but as the most powerful remedy against it, it is necessary they should learn that mediocrity which they ought to pursue, both in expending and amassing wealth: This is the prudence that teaches them to do both with decency; this is what shews that the means ought to be just, and the end honest. We must not get wealth by thieving, because this is a forbidden means; nor be luxurious, because this is an end very blameable.

This is the rule to be observ'd, if we would not run into the extremes that are vitious. It is prudence which shews us what we are; and that a peasant may be prodigal in doing that which can scarce be call'd liberal in a princess. Lastly, it is this, which to induce us to be good managers, discovers to us that the largest sums of money are made up of so many small parcels; and that as great affluence often comes from many little savings, so great poverty may ensue from many trifling expences\*. For this reason *Cato* says there

\* There is a great deal of meaning in that saying of a late frugal old gentleman, *My boy, take care of your half-pence; guineas will take care of themselves.*

are two ways of gaining, agriculture and good management ; because as agriculture gathers great crops from having sowed many small grains, so a good manager by many small savings reaps the fruits of his oeconomy in great abundance.

Since then there may be as great abuse in spending money as in hoarding it, having spoken of the several sorts of avarice, we shall now, in order to render this discourse more useful, briefly treat of its opposite luxury. This seems indeed the more common malady of the sex, without excepting those of low condition and mean birth. They must be expensive let the consequence be what it will ; there is nothing they will not do or suffer for this ; it is of no concernment to them to expose their honour, and to act like *Tarpeia* \* ;

\* *Tarpeia*. daughter of *Tarpeius*, governor of the capitol, promised the *Sabins* to betray the fort into their hands, provided they would give her what they wore on their left arms, meaning their bracelets. *Tatius*, the captain of the *Sabins*, by this means entering the capitol, commanded his men, in regard of his contract, not to refuse *Tarpeia* the least part of what they wore on their left arms ; and first took the bracelet off his arm, and threw it together with his buckler upon her ; the rest doing the like, she was thereby smother'd and press'd to death. Which reminds *Plutarch* of a saying of *Julius Caesar*, in the case of *Rhymitacles* the *Thracian*, He loved the treason, but hated the traitor. *Plutarch* in the life of *Romulus*.—Parallel of Greeks and Romans.—*Livy* lib. 1.

who

who was buried under the reward that she herself had demanded, and stifled beneath the bucklers she received of the *Sabins*; they regard not the ruining their families or consuming their patrimony. If we approve not of their luxury, they are always in a bad humour; one will never put on a smiling look till she has got a richer gown, and another is continually grumbling for a finer equipage.

It is example that spoils them; they are sumptuous out of mere envy to one another, and oftentimes without any regard to their fortune or extraction. But their vanity goes farther; whatever merit a man may have, he cannot please them without imitating them in luxury; nay, they will say that the most ill-shapen coxcomb is a very clever fellow, only because he is extravagant. Is not this a strange way of thinking in these coquettes? Must we not believe that they have renounc'd all virtue, when they give so great preference to the goods of fortune?

Was I to oppose this blindness with general reasons, such as would serve both sexes, I might declare that luxury is contrary to nature, which is always contented with a little, while nothing can satisfy fancy; that if the rich were not to abuse their wealth there could be no poor; because if there was no superfluity there could be no want of necessa-

ries; that the world hath wherewithal to maintain its inhabitants; and that such as amass or who spend too much are, those who hinder others from having what is useful for the enjoyment of life.

From reason I might pass on to religion, and shew that nothing is so contrary to christianity as luxury; because it is not only an enemy to all modesty but also to charity. That the holy scripture accuses of murder those who refuse nourishment to others that are in want, when they have it in their power to relieve them; that, to turn them from this foolish extravagance, and oblige them to act more righteously, God himself is pleased to demand something of them in the name of the poor; and yet to ask nothing more of them than a share of those good things which he himself has given them, and of which he rather made them stewards than proprietors. These seem to me strong arguments; and tho' they may be proper for both sexes, yet women may apply them to themselves, by thinking it a shame for them to be so extravagantly sumptuous, as they are reasonable creatures and christians.

Yet I am not content with these arguments, strong as they are, and therefore shall add some that are more particular. The excessive extravagance which they affect, is not only contrary

to the modesty and charity, but also to the chastity of an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN. The sin of luxury gives birth as well as a name to another still more infamous; the chaste are generally bashful, and the extravagantly sumptuous almost always bold and insolent. Whatever apology may be made for the vicious, I can never think such costly sumptuousness altogether innocent; especially I cannot see how it can be approv'd of by christians. I cannot comprehend how they should have the least thoughts of eternity, or that they make the least reflexion upon the religion they profess. Certainly they would live with more modesty if they in the least consider'd, in what manner their vanity may possibly be punished: But did I say their vanity? Rather their inhumanity, when they not only behold around them, without the least pity, many miserable objects, whose silent prayers ask nothing more of them than a small share of their superfluities; but even when they are always studying to injure others to satisfy their luxury, and make no conscience of robbing them even of the necessaries of life to supply their unprofitable extravagance.

Without doubt this thought will chagrin them, and they will think this discourse somewhat too severe; to accommodate it therefore to their weakness, and not to blind them  
with

with the too glaring light of christianity, -I shall be satisfied if they would only open their eyes to that of the *Gentiles* and heathen world. I shall set before them the single example of a pagan lady, whom all antiquity esteem'd for the aversion she shew'd to luxury.

Let them reflect upon the modesty of *Phocion's* wife\*, who was often praised in a full senate with the general approbation of the spectators, and had gained universal applause from all that knew her. When one of her friends was shewing her her rings, necklaces, and jewels; *What is the splendor of all these treasures,* says she, *when compared with that which beams from the virtues of Phocion; I glory more in being his wife than was I to be array'd with the proudest ornaments that Athens or the world could furnish.* This lady, such an enemy to luxury, was not of a mean spirit or low fortune; her husband had been chosen twenty

\* *Plutarch* has not mention'd the name of this lady, but in his life of *Phocion* he adds to what is here reported of her; that, when at the acting a new tragedy, one of the principal actors who was to perform the part of a queen, refused going upon the stage, because he wanted a proper habit; *Melantius* who gave the entertainment, push'd him on, saying, *You are fine enough, look there on Phocion's wife; but you, forsooth, are for setting our ladies a bad example, and filling their heads with pride and vanity.* This speech was overheard by the audience, and receiv'd with applause by the whole house.

times




times the general of the *Athenians*; yet when she walk'd in the city, she was attended but with one servant, and was always as modest in her dress and equipage as some ladies of our days study to be sumptuous and extravagant.



C H A P. XVIII.

*Of the HUMILITY of an accomplish'd  
W O M A N.*

 O shew that the infidels themselves thought humility a necessary accomplishment in women, I shall exhibit the commendations which *Plutarch* bestows on the wife of *Pompey*. Behold the picture which a heathen writer hath drawn of an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN, in depainting the merit and modesty of this *Roman* lady.

“ *This lady, says he, besides the charms of her*  
 “ *beauty, had many attractive qualities from*  
 “ *her education; she had made a great progress*  
 “ *in most parts of learning; she was well skil-*  
 “ *led in the mathematics, and took great plea-*  
 “ *sure in hearing the discourses of philosophers,*  
 “ *or reading their works, not without receiving*  
 “ *profit therefrom. But what crowned all the*  
 “ *rest was that these extraordinary qualifications*  
 “ *ren-*

## 254 *The ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN.*

“ render’d her not proud or petulant, as young ladies are apt to be who can boast of the like advantages in birth, fortune, and education.”

It is *Plutarch* that gives this lesson of humility; it is from an heathen they may learn modesty, and that, as incomparable as they may be in the beauties of the face or mind, they merit not the title of an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN, unless they are humble. Whatever some may think, this virtue was in no small practice among the *Gentile* philosophers; they taught in their schools the knowledge of self, which is generally attended with humility: They blamed ambition and arrogance; and tho’ indeed they might not have this virtue in so perfect a degree as we have; yet they evinc’d their having ’t in some measure, since even their poets made war against ambition by describing the overthrow of the giants, the fall of *Phaeton*, and the death of *Salmoneus* by lightning\*.

But to give a greater light in this matter, and to prevent women from being deceiv’d in their judgment with regard to the humility here recommended, I must first observe to them, that there are five sorts of humility; the stupid, the forced, the worldly, the moral, and the christian: The two last only are

\* He pretended to set up for a god, and to imitate thunder, by driving his chariot over a bridge of brass.  
commend-

commendable ; the other three are defective. The stupid is the humility of a brute animal, the forced is the humility of devils, and the worldly the humility of a cheat.

Stupid humility is nothing else but a defect in the constitution, and the want of spirit and courage : 'Tis not an easy matter to judge of the difference ; we sometimes take natural simplicity for moral humility. Many appear humble, who are only silly and stupid ; if they had more spirit, they would not seem so sober and reserv'd : It is not a virtue of the soul, but the defect of nature. And yet, tho' it be not commendable, it is happy ; because the vulgar, who only judge by appearances, esteem it as much as that which is form'd from a modest opinion of ourselves.

Forced humility is also as defective, because it is an abasement by constraint ; the devils may be said to be humbled, tho' they be not humble ; therefore it is not properly humility, but only humiliation : It cannot be a virtue without having our consent. Humility must not be thrown down headlong, but descend gently of itself to its own center ; it must have a natural and not a violent motion ; or indeed if it be push'd, it must approve of such violence.

Lastly, worldly humility cannot be called a virtue, because it concerns not the inward part, but belongs only to the outward appearance. It is oftentimes vanity in disguise, which seeks  
glory

glory in turning away from it, and makes not its congeès but in order to receive them ; it lends out honour upon usury. If this oil descends at first to the bottom of the glass when poured in upon other liquors, it soon ascends to the top ; and is condescending at the beginning, only to be more imperious in the end.

There are but two sorts of humility that deserve esteem. Still we must own, if the moral is commendable on the account of its being voluntary, and its end just and honest, that it is not yet perfect without the assistance of the christian, which is form'd in a more excellent manner, and hath eyes to see more clearly our vileness and the infinite perfections of God. The humility of christians ought to go much farther than that of heathens. If their gods descended upon earth and appear'd to them, as their fables say, in the likeness of man, it was in order to commit some lewd action : But the God of the christians has not only given them lessons of humility, but himself hath set them an example. It is our peculiar advantage to have an humble God ; and to see supreme greatness lodg'd in extreme lowliness ; it is this that obligeth us more than others to the practice of this virtue ; since there never were any nations that worship, like us, a God who was pleased to humble himself to the very center of shame and pain.

But

But to treat of this in another manner, according to my common stile and the promise before made, I shall endeavour to shew that this virtue is not only necessary to salvation, but to the well-being of all society; and that it is not only proper for the institution of a devotée, but absolutely requisite to form the ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN. Let us consider what qualities are most desirable, in order to please in conversation, and succeed in the affairs of life. Now, nothing can contribute more to this purpose, and nothing can be more lovely than sincerity, sweetness of temper, fidelity, and patience. And are not these the four fair effects which divinity itself attributes to humility? Are they not the rays of this sun, the rivers from this spring? True humility is not deceitful, churlish, inconstant, or passionate. It bears with the faults of others, it speaks with courteousness, it acts with pure simplicity, it loves with constancy.

There is no conversation more agreeable than that of a person truly humble; on the contrary, nothing can be more insupportable than the conversation of the proud. To judge of this the better, let us take a view of the disdainful and self-sufficient. They are inflexibly stubborn in their opinion, they are continually boasting of themselves, they are deceitful and without affection; above all, they  
are

are ungrateful, and think they sufficiently recompense the services and devoirs that are paid them, by seeming to be pleased therewith. Lastly, they are revengeful; and as there are no praises so great as can satisfy them, there is no injury so small that will not fling them into the most spiteful passion. Is it not true then that without humility it is impossible to please in conversation, and succeed in the business of life? Is it not true that this is a virtue which reason alone sufficiently recommends, tho' religion had not commanded the practice of it?

Meethinks I hear some opponents to this virtue say, that it is not possible to be humble without being incapable of any great undertaking, and that humility contains a certain meanness in it quite opposite to generosity. But I must own I think there is as much ignorance as falsity in this opinion. Humility is no more contrary to courage than clemency is to justice. This error springs from hence; there are two virtues in morality, which seem incompatible, tho' in effect they are only different and not contrary to each other. These are magnanimity and modesty, which hinder our mind from wavering, and the not being guilty of any disorder when it lifts itself up, or is cast down. These two excellent habits are as the two tropics of  
reason,

reason, beyond which it ought never to pass while it expects to enjoy a proper light.

I think then it is manifest they may be found together in the same person, and in the same action. The single example of *Judith* shews clearly this truth; for without any confidence in her own strength, she conceiv'd the most brave and important design that could possibly be put into action. Was she not both humble and magnanimous in her undertaking? Had she not humility when she fell down on her knees before God, and acknowledged her weakness? And did she want courage, when she march'd through the armies of her enemies, and with her own hands cut off the head of proud *Holofernes*? And to pass from sacred history to profane, do we not find the same truth confirm'd in the example of the wife of *Pampey*? *Plutarch* observes that she was humble, but he observes likewise that she was very brave and noble: She was not less courageous than modest, when in the disgrace of her husband she testified an incomparable resolution, not only in attending him every where, but even in giving him more comfort than the philosopher *Crasippus*.

Humility takes not away courage, but regulates it; or to speak according to christian philosophy, it knows as well to lift up the eyes as to cast them down. After it has consider'd  
its

its own weakness, it has regard to the powers of God ; it relies not on human aid but on the divine. It is on this account that humility is so magnanimous while vanity is so cowardly. I need not pursue this matter any further, it is enough to go back to experience, which shews but too often, that women who are proud are incapable of any great undertaking. Ambitious women have never any generosity in their designs, nor patience in their afflictions ; as they are insolent in good fortune, they are as soon dejected in bad.

This is the source of their blindness ; as they never made any reflexions on what they are, when upon any accident they see their weakness, they are quite terrified and lose their courage ; whereas the humble by continually employing themselves in self-knowledge, are not terrified at any thing when they consider their own defects ; on the contrary, in proportion as they know their imperfections, they make use of the solid arguments of reason, and the further light of religion to strengthen them ; while the proud, blind with self-love, take no care of applying remedies to their defects, since they know them not, and are even afraid to learn what they are.

We are at last come to the true source of humility, when we speak of the knowledge of self : This science is very difficult and very rare.



**rare.** To learn other sciences we want masters and tutors ; but as to this, there is, honestly speaking, no one that can instruct us but ourselves. We must descend into the soul, as to an inner school, to learn an art, of which we are the subject, the preceptors, and the scholars. And indeed we can scarce meet with any person who does not assist us in concealing our faults from ourselves. If a woman is of high condition, we dare not inform her ; if she be a woman of little consequence, we do not think it worth our trouble. We are either wanting in affection or freedom. Flatterers will tell the bold they are good-humour'd, the cruel that they are generous, and coquettes that they are genteel and know the art of animating their beauty.

These then are the principal enemies to self-knowledge. The scornful and calumnious are alike enemies thereto ; and as on one hand flattery gives us more merit than we really have, detraction on the other hand finds out blemishes and imperfections that we have not. 'Tis also true, that, rightly to know ourselves, we must not think that we are either richer or poorer than we really are. But after all, we must confess that detraction does not put us in so much danger as flattery. As flattery makes us still go farther from ourselves, detraction makes us enter within. We  
are

are more curious to examine whether we are guilty of a crime when we are accused of it, than to inquire whether we are worthy of praise when it is bestowed upon us. As we are more apt to think well of ourselves than ill, so we reflect not so much upon flattery as upon detraction. This therefore is more useful, as it contributes to our knowing what we are, while flattery prevents it.

Besides, the slanderer harms us not so much in painting our merit less than it really is, as the flatterer in making it greater. Slanderers only concern themselves with what we are in the opinion of others, intending to abuse them to our detriment; but flatterers endeavour to abuse us in ourselves, and to seduce our own judgment. The former are enemies to our reputation, the latter to our conscience: It is also against these enemies that we must employ the knowledge of self. As it is in the inner part where flattery casts clouds and darkness in order to blind us, it is there that we must set up this flambeau: And undoubtedly self-love will fly away, as *Cupid* did from *Psyche*, as soon as this lamp is lighted up.

Let it not be objected here, that humility ought to close her eyes upon whatever good we have; for by just reasoning on this virtue, we shall find that it is founded no less upon the consideration of our merit than upon that  
of

of our imperfections. I may go further and say with *M. de Sales*, that we are more oblig'd to be humble from considering the good qualities that we are endowed with, than by regarding those we want. But I shall give you the words of this great bishop instead of referring you to his introduction\*. "Many are unwilling and afraid to think on the favours that God hath particularly bestowed upon them, for fear of being guilty of vain-glory; but herein they are greatly deceived, for since the true means of attaining the love of God is the consideration of his benefits; the more we know them the more we shall love him; and as particular favours work more powerfully upon us than common, so ought they to be consider'd more attentively. Surely nothing can humble us so much before the mercy of God as his manifold blessings. There is no reason to fear that the knowledge of what he hath done for us should puff us up, provided we are attentive to this truth, *That all that is good in us is not from ourselves*. On the contrary the lively consideration of favours received makes us humble; for knowledge begets thankfulness."

\* An excellent treatise called *An introduction to a devout life*. To which *P. d' Ablancourt*, in his defence of our author thinks these discourses may properly be called an introduction.

But

But since I have borrow'd these arguments from this great writer, let me also borrow the example he makes use of in the sequel of his discourse. "The *Virgin*, says he, confesses "that God had done marvellous things for "her; and yet this confession of favours receiv'd hinder'd her not from being the most "humble as well as the most perfect of her "sex." What reason is there why we should not humble ourselves the more in proportion to the blessings we have receiv'd? Have we not more cause to worship God, the more clearly we see his goodness in the benefits conferred upon us? But to return; I have elsewhere said, that there are some who disown the good things they have received through ingratitude; and here I say, they sometimes do the same through vanity.

This is the false humility of the age. Many say they are imperfect, but it is with a design that we should say the contrary. They fly from glory, that it may run after them. This is not true humility, because it shews itself; it is not enough for humility to hide other virtues, it must also hide itself; it is to be vain, to desire to be thought humble. Christian modesty affects not to shew its imperfections any more than its merit; because as there is vanity in the one, there is artifice in the other. True humility is ingenuous and simple, if it discovers its goodness to a neighbour,

bour, it is in order to edify him ; if it shews its imperfections, it is for fear of deceiving him.

If this reasoning seems too fine-spun for some women, I must send them back again to the school of self-knowledge, whether they have any merit or not ; if they have not, shame will make them humble ; if they have any merit, a grateful acknowledgment will do the same, provided that their sight be not darken'd by self-love : Let them consider themselves as much as they please, they are in no danger of the fate of *Narcissus*, who fatally fell in love with himself. This science can never hurt them ; and as *Aurora* seems both the mother and sister of the sun, the knowledge of self seems both the effect and cause of humility. It is the spring and river of it ; it gives it being, and then receives the same from it.

Yet as this matter may be carried infinitely further, and on which side soever we look upon ourselves we shall still find reason to be humble ; it seems proper to pitch upon some particular reflexion, to draw the more profit from the knowledge of ourselves. Women have need but of one consideration to induce them to be humble ; and to this purpose without using those reasons which they have in common with men, as they are christians let them seriously examine the simplicity and

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obedience that our religion requires of them. *As the church, saith the holy Spirit, is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing* \*. This is their rule, this their true remedy against vanity. — For what can be objected to this comparison? This law was not made by any tyranny of man; it is God himself who prescribes it to them, to retain them in their duty, and to hinder the effect of their inclination, should it affect dominion when obedience is their proper sphere.

I shall conclude this discourse with an observation, which will make the most vain ashamed, if it does not create humility. When the oracle ordain'd that a tripod of gold should be given to the most wise, the seven sages of *Greece* were so modest, as to refer it one to another †; but when the oracle commanded that a golden apple should be given to the fairest, the three goddesses shew'd not so much reservedness; they all three pleaded their cause before the judge, and sought to be preferred one to the other. Thus three women disputed for the prize of beauty; and seven wise men contended who should refuse the prize of wisdom.

\* Ephes. v. 24. Col. iv. 18. 1 Cor. xi. 3, 9. xiv. 34. 1 Tim. ii. 9—12. Gen. iii. 16. Esth. i. 22. Prov. xxxi. 10. Eccles. xxvi. 13—22. xxxvi. 23, 24.

† See *Plutarch* in the life of *Solon*.



C H A P. XVIII.

*Of the CONSCIENCE.*

**A**S chief magistrates often order the punishment of a crime in the same place where it was committed, so in the conscience is sin punish'd with bitter remorse, even in the same place where it was conceiv'd by lust: There it finds its punishment as well as birth. Vice, like the viper, tears the bowels where it is engender'd. What torment do some women undergo from sin? They indeed travel in pain, as did their first mother. It is the curse entail'd on all those who listen to the tempter. Let them be as subtle as they will, their artifices are at length discover'd, or prove vain. They are taken in their own toils, like *Arachne*. The poets say that *Io* being changed into a cow, instead of concealing herself, mark'd her name, wherever she went, with her foot\*; surely we may say the same of those whom sin hath changed into beasts, in thinking to hide their designs they generally discover them and betray themselves.

\* Ovid. Met. lib. i. ver. 649.

But supposing their subtlety as successful as it is criminal: What tortures do they still undergo? They are always in alarm; they are like the *Spartan* boy, who for fear of being found out for thieving, suffered the young fox he had stoln to prey upon his bowels \*. Tho' they may hide their inquietude from others, they cannot prevent it from vexing them within; tho' they escape the evidence of men, they cannot fly from that of their conscience. Do what they can, being alone they often blush when the shadow of their sin presents itself before them. And when in company, they think every one jests upon them, or that they equivocate; so dangerous an interpreter is their fear. What trouble are they at to get clear of an intrigue? They are continually in fear lest their galant should blab or leave them. If they are assur'd of his discretion, they cannot be so of his constancy. If it is a trouble to them to part from confidence, it is not less to maintain it. They are always in fear lest any one should corrupt the fidelity of their confidants, knowing that such as serve for hire scruple not to change their masters for better wages.

Look on *Phædra* when in love with *Hippolitus* †: How great is their anxiety! All the

\* See Plutarch in the life of Lycurgus. Montaigne's essays, lib. ii. cap. 32.

† Ovid. epist. Euripides, Hippolitus.



passions combine together to disturb her soul; she is tormented with love, desire, fear, hope, rage, and grief at the same time. May we not say that she is tortur'd by all the furies, tho' they are nothing but her own thoughts? What pains did *Fausta* take in the like horrid amour for *Crispus*, and afterwards for revenge! causing him to be condemn'd to death upon false accusations, and being herself soon after condemn'd, when *Constantine* had discover'd her wickedness! such is the dreadful uneasiness of the guilty.

I grant they may sometimes succeed in their designs, and meet with no great difficulty in committing sin; yet is it not enough to deter them, to consider the remorse of those who have fallen therein? Their conscience is always upon the rack; there is no freedom in their conversation; we can see them but at certain times; they are indispos'd almost every hour of the day; assignations and love-letters are their full employ. They are exceeding bad company, seeming always thoughtful and melancholy; one is troubled at the presence of her husband; another is chagrin'd at his coming in unseasonably. Had we no other reason to produce, I think this would be sufficient; at least we ought to preserve innocence for the sake of liberty, and shun vice in order to shun fear. It is impossible to be

in a good humour without having a good conscience. True peace and sin can never live together; we can never be vicious and content at the same time.

How happy are the innocent! how sweet is their conversation! how free! the contentment they feel within displays itself around, and is visible in the countenance. The gaiety which springs from virtue shews itself in conversation and in every the least action: 'Tis an holy odour which perfumes even the dress, and communicates itself to every thing that is near it. *Plutarch* says, that the sweet odour of *Antisthenes* perfumed his ragged clothes\*, while there came a rank smell from the fine robes of *Anchises*. Anxiety is cover'd under the appearance of grandeur, while true gaiety reigns in the souls of those who preserve their innocence, be their outward appearance what it will. The guilty fly when none persueth, except it be the shadow of their sin, which constantly attends them.

I know the unfortunate may be in bad plight as well as the criminal; but there is a great deal of difference between them: Affliction does not trouble us like sin. Fortune

\* I cannot recollect where *Plutarch* says this of *Antisthenes*, but in his *Symposiasts*, lib. i. quæst. 6. he says that the body of *Alexander* scented his clothes with an aromatical odour.

cannot affect us but externally, but crimes harrow us within by means of remorse: Besides, misery is not ashamed to shew itself, like wickedness. This causeth horror, that only pity, and then the testimony of conscience is a powerful comforter to the innocent, but a cruel executioner to the vitious. To the innocent, in the darkest night of affliction God oftentimes makes some stars appear; they find some drops of sweet water in the ocean of bitterness. Whatever difficulty they meet with in preserving innocence, they have still that within which animates and encourages them to withstand all menaces and assaults.

And as innocence is the greatest of all good, women of spirit and courage have not spared life itself for the preservation of it. Let us see what some have done to eschew vice, and especially to defend themselves from those who attack'd their chastity. When *Pelagia* was condemn'd to the stews, she begg'd she might have time to dress herself as fine as possible, saying, she should be ashamed to appear in deshabille. She re-enter'd her house, where having dress'd herself like a bride, and taken the chaplet and nosegay in her hand, she said, " Shall I permit  
" this body to be sullied which I have devoted to God? It may still continue pure in  
" pain, but it cannot in pleasure. It would

“ be happier under the hands of an execu-  
 “ tioner, than of those infamous wretches  
 “ who wait without for it. It is true, I am  
 “ a’raid to die, but I am more afraid to  
 “ break my vow; I dread perjury more  
 “ than martyrdom, and had rather part  
 “ with my life than my fidelity. I ought  
 “ not to call any persons my executioners,  
 “ but those that prevent me from dying :  
 “ And in such an extremity death, however  
 “ procured, would be less violence than to be  
 “ forced to live. When I see no possibility  
 “ of a retreat in this world to shun their in-  
 “ famous attempts; what wonder is it that I  
 “ shou’d desire to pass into the next to avoid  
 “ their pursuit? This surely would not be so  
 “ much a murder as a flight. This is but to  
 “ suffer a less evil to avoid a greater : But if  
 “ this action be criminal, I hope the design  
 “ will mitigate the offense.”

After she had pronounc’d these words she  
 flung herself from the top of the house to the  
 no less astonishment than vexation of those  
 who waited her coming out : The judges  
 offended at this her resolution, order’d her  
 sisters and her mother to be condemn’d to the  
 same place : But the mother having notice of  
 it took her daughters in her hand, and led  
 them along, as if they were dancing, to the  
 side of the river where they leap’d in, the  
 mother

mother leading the way, and encouraging them to this resolute action. I know that murder can never be justified, nor can it be right to commit one sin to avoid another; however blameable therefore these women might be, we may at least learn from these examples the value that some have set upon chastity.

In this rank likewise we may put *Sophronia*, whom St. *Austin* so much admires, and makes no scruple to call her a martyr. *Maxentius* being in love with her, and having made some overtures to her, she complain'd of it to her husband, who dared not to oppose the chief magistrate of *Rome*, and was more afraid to lose his office than his wife. He dissembled like another *Mecænas*: And when one day *Sophronia* found herself press'd by *Maxentius*, and that she had no remedy under her misfortune, she desired likewise some time to equip herself; but instead of other ornaments she took up a sword and slew herself. In this manner St. *Austin* commends her, and gives her the advantage over the Roman *Lucretia*. *Sophronia* slew herself as it were by a sudden inspiration; *Lucretia*, in a fit of despair. I need not mention any other examples of this sort, or run through the catalogue of those who have suffer'd death for the preservation of their innocence or their re-

ligion. Let us see what opinion the heathens themselves had of the virtue of women, and in what abomination they held the vicious. Why did they so esteem their religious but on account of their virtue? Did not God himself set a mark of approbation on the virginity of the heathens in endowing the *Sibyls* with the gift of prophecy? The *Gentiles*, saith St. *Jerom*, so highly esteem'd the purity of women, that they have placed a *virgin*, but no other woman among the stars.

How greatly were the *Vestals* honour'd, and how severely punish'd! we may see from these what the ancients thought of the vice and virtue of women. Tho' *Artemisia* died in fighting against the *Lacedemonians*, they erected statues, and conferr'd on her no less honours than if she had been of their own party\*. When some young women were presented to *Cyrus*, among whom was *Aspasia*, the rest being intirely at his disposal, *Aspasia* with the most sedate countenance kept her eyes fix'd upon the ground. *Cyrus* approaching to salute her, she lifted up her hand to strike him, which so charm'd the monarch that he dismiss'd all the rest, and detain'd *Aspasia* alone.

If innocence then had such charms to attract the heathens themselves, what ought it to

\* Just. ii. 12. Aulus Gellius, x. 18.

have

have among us ? Are not christians more obliged to abominate vice than the pagans ? Shall a woman that is addicted to vice take upon her the name of a *gentlewoman* any more in this age than in that of the *Gentiles* ? The dread that we have of sin is founded upon other threatnings than what were given to the heathens, who knew of no other punishments than those they found in the poets, and were terrified only with fictions and fables. They likewise placed *Dido* in the *Elysian* fields, as if after her amours and her despair she had any right to a place of happiness.

But let us consult those of better judgment ; let us be ashamed of such blind guides, and to learn from heathens the esteem we ought to have for virtue. Tho' we may read in *Cicero*, that *man hath nothing to fear but sin* ; and in *Plutarch*, that *it is sin alone that can make us miserable* \* ; yet we have other reasons for this fear : The happiness we lose thereby and the pain it will one day torment us with, are of much greater importance than any arguments we can find among the *Gentiles*, who proposed no other reward for innocence than these three things, the tranquillity of the soul, the approbation of the world, and the escape from corporal punishment.

\* See his treatise on this subject.

We consider sin in another respect, as it is at enmity with God, and its consequence eternal punishment. Both fear and love contribute to preserve us in our virtue. These are other thoughts than what the heathens had ; there is no doubt then that christian women would have more care of the inward part, if they examin'd as they ought what a mean dwelling it becomes after sin ; if they consider'd the dangerous wound that it gives the soul ; the fatal shade that darkens the light of grace ; the mortal privation that effaces God in our spirit, if I may so speak, and blots us out of the number of his elect.

And if any take it amiss that I should enter so far into the points of religion, in endeavouring as I have done to strike so great an horror of sin ; I beg they would only consider what are the principal qualities that make the truly *good man* or the ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN. Surely, they are what they must learn from religion, not only among christians but among the heathens themselves. As all the world confess that an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN ought to have moral virtue, we must likewise own that she ought to take care of her conscience by loving virtue and dreading vice. Whatever qualities a woman may be endowed with among us, it is impossible she should be thoroughly accomplish'd without being devout : She cannot



**not** merit this egregious title, as I have said before in a former discourse, without having the moral virtues; and justice which is one of the principal moral virtues cannot be without religion.

I grant then that in treating of this matter others have been contented with speaking of their behaviour, and whatever regards external decency: But I had rather speak of whatever regards the conscience. Others talk of gentility; but I had rather they should study virtue, and prefer the care of their mind to that of their beauty: I think it more necessary for them to adorn the inward part than the external. I think that by acquired parts and knowledge they would render the natural more certain, and never want any of those qualities which civility demands to make them agreeable in company. As nature proposes the production of the substance before that of accidents, so they ought to propose in the art of instruction, what is most solid and most necessary, before they addict themselves to that which is only decent and less profitable. And as a painter can never succeed who takes more pains in the drapery than in the face, so I should think my labour ill-bestowed if, in drawing the picture of an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN, I had only painted the external ornaments, without touching her natural features and the true charms wherein all her beauty consists. I  
approve

approve of decency, I esteem agreeableness, and love gentility: But still this is not enough for the ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN; she must above all things study to conduct the mind, and preserve the conscience. She must first fix virtue in the will, after that, knowledge in the understanding; and lastly, a genteel air in her countenance and behaviour.



## C H A P. XIX.

## OF CHRISTIAN VIRTUE;

*As it is absolutely necessary for an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN.*

**W**E cannot do a greater injury to the christian virtues than to set them forth as impracticable: This however is the artifice of some libertines, who to prevent women from applying themselves thereto, tell them that it is a way full of thorns, altogether repugnant to the delicacy of their temper, and to that gaiety which is necessary to make them agreeable companions. But when they make the practice of virtue so austere and grievous, they do no less wrong in diverting women from it, than those men did to the *Israelites* who prevented them from going to the land of *Canaan*. As these reported that it was

a land full of monsters, that devoured the inhabitants, so the false friends of virtue represent it as full of difficulties, and as what takes away all agreeableness and courage. But as these people curious to know the truth from experience, having sent men expressly to see whether the land was as bad as it was represented to them, found the contrary, and were well satisfied on seeing the fruit which the messengers brought back from thence\*; we may say the same of christian virtue, for if we examine without prejudice the great good it does the soul, we shall find that they who decry it, are either ignorant or libertines; and that its way is as sweet and pleasant as they have described it rugged and inaccessible.

Let us examine the life and actions of some illustrious lady, to see if christian virtue hinders them from being agreeable to men of sense, or whether by being devout they have been less courteous. But not to take a woman of mean birth or merit, let us cast our eyes upon the princess *Clara Eugenia Isabella the Infanta of Spain*, to see whether piety and diversion may not be found together; to see, I say, whether probity and civility are incompatible. *With respect to the piety of her court*, says cardinal Bentivoglio, *we should undoubtedly take her palace for a monastery; but on the other hand, if we consider the pomp and majesty of it, there is*

\* Numb. xiii. 14. Deut. i.

*no one but would think it the most brilliant and magnificent in the whole world.* This court then was holy and delightful at the same time. Tho' this wise princess gave all the time that was requisite to the exercise of christian virtue, she restrain'd not herself from employing some hours in recreation. She sometimes went a hunting, and sometimes took the trouble to let fly an hawk: She was no enemy to innocent exercises, but never profaned them by an extravagant equipage: She never affected the cavalier with hat and feather, or to be dressed like a goddess. She never disguised herself for the sake of any pleasure: as she was devout without austerity, she was gay without insolence: She never appear'd frantic and giddy-headed; modesty was inseparable from all her actions. And as she never thought there was any sport or pastime where it was permitted a woman to be foolish and extravagant; she had not the least air of a coquette, but was grave without being dull, and airy without being light.

This example, methinks, has weight in every circumstance. She was a princess not far from us either in time or place: She was a foreigner, whom virtue alone and not favour makes us esteem. Regarding well her life, we shall see how wrong it is to be ashamed of christian virtue; that in having the grace of God we may no less acquire the favour of man;  
and

and that it is not impossible to find in the same person devotion and gaiety, modesty and sweetness, innocence and pleasantness, agreeableness and virtue. In her alone the rest of the sex may see, that as moral virtue is absolutely necessary for an ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN, christian virtue is much more so ; and that this not only gives a lustre but also facility to the other. And indeed what is there in christian virtue that can render moral virtue more grievous ? Whatever may be said it does not lead it astray but conducts it ; it hinders it not but makes it more free ; it renders it not mean but more bold ; it augments both its lustre and its strength.

When moral virtue becomes christian, it is made more noble by this divine adoption, more pure by this holy baptism, more fruitful by this sacred marriage. The union of christian virtue is not less advantageous to moral virtue, than that of the reasonable soul when joined to the animal and sensitive. I have made this comparison elsewhere, but it is so just and useful, that it well may be enlarg'd upon in this place, where it will give us much light with regard to the subject in hand. In many respects the alliance between these two sorts of virtue resembles that of the body and spirit, but I shall only touch upon the principal : As after the soul is infused we attribute even sensible effects to a spiritual cause ; so after christian virtue is joined  
with

with moral, the actions which were human become divine by reason of their principle. Virtue takes its birth from a most noble shoot, and as the actions of a sensitive soul are attributed to the reasonable soul; so the effects of that virtue, which of itself is only natural, are attributed to the christian which is heavenly, on account of the grace that renders it fruitful. Lastly, as we do not say that the sensitive and animal souls are hinder'd by the rational, it would be very wrong to say that the moral virtues were hinder'd by the christian. On the contrary, they are exalted from their natural state by this means; they are assisted and enobled.

Is it not a great advantage to moral virtue, which of itself is human and cannot produce other than natural effects, that it should produce such as are capable of eternity, when accompanied with christian virtue? This takes nothing away from the other but sterility and meanness; it makes it both more noble and more fruitful. The children of the bondwoman may aspire to inheritance, when they are born between the hands of her mistress; she gives the children to God being assisted by christian virtue, as *Bilhab* gave them to *Jacob*, being owned and allowed of by *Rachel*\*. Moral virtue produceth effects worthy of heaven when accompanied with the christian.

\* Gen. xxx. 3-8.

These two virtues are as the two arms of the soul, but the christian only appears as the right hand, when the moral is no more seen than the left hand of the holy bride\*. They are as the two eyes ; but tho' they see together, we attribute to them but one sight. Lastly, tho' these two virtues labour together, we give all the merit to the christian, as to the eye that sees more clearly, as to the hand that is the stronger, and as to the mistress most beloved.

Moral virtue is as a wild tree, which brings forth no fruit but what is full of bitterness ; it must be grafted with christian virtue, without which the other is but an useless trunk. Whatever hath been said of the virtue of the heathens, it never produced any fruit ; their prudence degenerated into craft, and their fortitude into rage ; they commonly exercised justice through fear, or temperance through vanity ; their virtue had always something in it rude and irksome. If the women were chaste, they were generally insolent ; if they had any sentiments of goodness and honour, it was because they were useful and agreeable. The greatest part of them dealt by moral virtue as our hypocrites do by the christian.

Let us now come to the certainty and assurance that christian virtue communicates to moral, having seen in what manner it makes it

\* Cant. ii. 4.

more

more bright and noble. It not only augments its beauty, but its knowledge ; it not only renders it more precious, but more certain. Truly moral virtue walks not without fear and trembling ; it can have no assurance in what it does without the help of christian virtue. It loses its way with all its rules, and regards not the end or final good but with eyes ascaunt. The heathen philosophers with all their knowledge were in danger of falling every moment, as the ancient pilots were always in danger of shipwreck : As these, having no other art than that of regarding some high mountain or some of the stars, were not so certain in their navigation, as men have been since they have found out the use of the compass ; so the philosophers, who had only natural knowledge of good and evil, and who had no other than human laws to direct them in the conduct of life, often erred with regard to virtue. But since christian virtue hath been added to moral, the science of navigation hath been more certain on this wide sea of passions, where happen so many storms and tempests. Charity shews us a pole-star, which no clouds can hide from us. We see a sovereign good openly as in the day, and wherein the sight can never be deceiv'd ; we have nothing to do but to observe this for our conduct in all human actions.

What if all the ancient philosophy steer'd by the sight of some stars ? Surely they had no other



her light than that of custom, human laws, and reason. And what are these but wandering stars and uncertain splendors? For not to speak of custom, which comes from too shameful a source to be certain, nor of human law which is generally full of obscurity if not of ignorance, I shall only observe that the ancients were at a great loss to explain what they meant by right reason. It could not be called right either by law or custom, when all that custom or law had in them of good was borrow'd from reason; how could the source itself have its origin from the streams that flowed from it? How could the sun borrow his light from the planets which receive their light from him? If the laws are not good but forasmuch as they are conformable to reason; from whence had reason its rectitude, if I may so speak concerning the law, but that it retook what it had before given, or rather that it is not right but by its own conduct. This then is the circle of the ancients. Hence reason without christianity cannot but be fluctuating and uncertain; hence I say, it cannot be regulated but by christianity, which gives it a superior light, and strengthens the works of nature by the assistance of grace.

The light of grace makes up for the eclipses of reason; it prevents it from being vague and unsteady; it sets it bounds and limits, which take not away its liberty but only its uncertainty,  
which

which keeps it not from acting but from falling. Christian virtue hinders not moral from walking, but from losing its way. Instead of a glare which was often hid by the clouds of ignorance, or extinguish'd by the breath of the passions, it gives a light which always shines and which is a more certain guide than either the pole-star or north-wind. This is a light which not only shines but heats. Christian virtue not only guides the moral virtues, but animates and encourages them.

I do not wonder that the heathen women wanted fortitude and true perseverance: They had not this divine assistance, they wanted this grace which strengthens us, and which hath given such firm resolutions to young women, even in their tenderest years, as not to be terrified at threatnings or torture. The heathens had not this holy unction which sweetens all within; they had not this guide which both instructs and assists us. Grace is to us what *Hero's* torch was to *Leander*, that not only gave him light, but animated him amidst the waves, when he saw the tower where dwelt the object of his love, and the reward of all his pain. Without doubt we are not only enlightened, but encouraged by this light, which shews us our last end, and holds forth an immortal crown.

What

What did *Clelia* \* propose in her noble actions, when being given in hostage to *Porfenna*, she made her escape from him by swimming the river in her apparel; and then apprehending that her return might prejudice the *Roman* state, she repass'd the *Tiber*, and deliver'd herself again into the hands of her conqueror, having given two such extraordinary proofs of her resolution? What did *Telephilla* propose, when of herself she so inspirited the women of *Argos* to defend their city against *Cleomenes*, that they drove him from the walls and made him raise the siege †? In short, what recompence did other women among the heathens propose in doing a noble action? Surely they could aspire to nothing more than a little vain-glory; they expected some reputation in their own country, and the applause of the world. We have other sort of prizes to expect from our labours. Without doubt we may say, that the commendable things they did were worth more than what they hoped for, and that their labour was more precious than their reward: Their probity was of greater value than their renown.

I know that among the *Aegyptians* God rewarded the compassion of many wise women, on

\* A *Roman* lady. See the story in *Plutarch's* life of *Poplicola*. Livy lib. i.

† *Plutarch*, on the virtues of women.

account of their refusing to obey the ordinances of a tyrant who intended to murder their innocent babes, and to slay all the male children of the *Hebrews* \*.

I know that among the heathens he rewarded the chastity of the *Sibyls* with the gift of prophesy, and the continence of the *Vestals* with the highest honours that could be given them; insomuch that the emperors themselves in the midst of their triumphs, if they chanced to meet them in the streets, shewed them a particular respect; that *Augustus* intrusted them with his will; that *Messalina* prayed them to speak to her husband for her; and *Vitellius* † asked the favour of them to appease the people.

Moral virtue then hath had some great rewards, but they were merely human; being founded only on a natural principle, it could expect but a temporal recompense. Charity must be joined to it as a supernatural principle: Without this, moral virtues are only servants to whom we owe some small wages; but the christian virtues are the legitimate daughters of a great prince, and the true heiresses of his kingdom. He gives to these the dew of heaven, and to the other only the fat of the land:

\* Exod. i. 17.

† The ninth emperor of *Rome*. A. D. 69. He reigned nine months.

Without

Without these the moral virtues are as pieces of gold unstamped ; if they have any value, it is not that of coin, but only of the metal : Not having the stamp of grace, they cannot be admitted to glory. Without these we can expect no other prize but what is from man, tho' we were so liberal as to give *all our goods to the poor*, tho' we had *faith enough to remove mountains* ; nay tho' we endured martyrdom, which however is the greatest testimony that we can give of our love and our courage in the service of God\*.

From hence we may judge, that moral virtue being alone cannot propose any recompence but what is unworthy of it ; from hence we may learn, why it sometimes ceaseth to do well, and why we see it so often out of breath, when it proposes to itself so slight an end as is worldly honour and the approbation of the people. The philosophers themselves and the most perfect among the *Gentiles* labour'd in vain : They advanc'd no further, not having charity to animate them, than the disciples did that were fishing on the lake of *Gennesareth* † in the absence of their master, and had been casting their nets in vain all the night long ; and having lived only according to the unassisted conduct of reason, they might well say with the

\* 1 Cor. xiii.

† Luke v. 5.

disciples, *They had taken nothing*, and that all their pains were unprofitable.

A great writer somewhat mysteriously said, that the virtue of christians was more beautiful than the *Helen* of the *Greeks* ; for if it is true, that the *Trojan* captains seeing the soldiers tired with so long a siege, could find no better means to rekindle their dying courage, than by shewing them the fair *Helen* for whom they fought, that they might be animated at the sight of so great a beauty, and that the cause of their labour was also a remedy for their weariness ; may we not say the same to those, who have lost their courage in any great design, or under some dire misfortune ? Is it not enough to set before them christian virtue, which is indeed more fair than *Helen*, having not only like her some natural graces, but even such as are altogether divine, capable of warming the coldest heart, and giving courage to the most cowardly ? If some heathens had reason to believe, that they could not but fall in love with moral virtue, were they to see her charms and graces ; might not this be more truly said of christian virtue ? May we not say, that if we could but discover her beauty, 'twould be impossible not to be enamour'd with her ?

But she hath far other charms to attract us. We have a more exalted notion than that of  
the

the heathens, who thought that virtue was to be beloved for herself alone. Tho' indeed she hath many charms to make her amiable, if we view her naked as she is, yet are we forbidden to stop here, nor are we allow'd to think that any production of men can be lovely for itself. Tho' virtue be fair, we must rather look upon the crown she offers than upon her face, and esteem her more for the reward she gives than for her own worth. If there is any thing truly amiable in us, it is only a shoot of grace; we must not look upon it as a production of the soul but of God. It is a pearl, which is rather the daughter of heaven than of the sea wherein it is formed; it is gold, which is rather the effect of the sun than of the earth that produced it.

May we not judge from hence, after so great advantages of christian above moral virtue, that this becomes more easy and practicable when it is accompanied with the other; and that there is no reason to think, that true devotion can be any hindrance to a person's appearing agreeable in conversation and expert in the affairs of the world. If all ages have wish'd for moral virtue in the ACCOMPLISH'D WOMAN of their days, how is it possible to form one in our days without designing her to have christian virtue? Especially since this renders the practice of the other more easy;

since it guides it back when it hath lost its way, and encourages it when it is weary; since it strengthens it with the hopes of glory, and enobles it by the means of grace: Lastly, since it communicates so many advantages to it, must we not say that our virtue ought to be more lively than that of the *Gentiles*; and that christian women ought to be of a better humour in the exercise of piety than were the heathens.

Let us stop our attention here a while, and, since we are come to that inward joy which virtue brings with it, let us judge of the wrong they do it, who think that they who practise it must needs be too melancholy for conversation; who think that it is not a quality for the court but for the cloister, and that it is too irksome for the entertainment of company. They certainly do it much wrong, since it is so far from being at all troublesome to company, that it removes all defects therefrom. And, as we have said in a former discourse, that in morality we must learn a truly courteous behaviour; we have much more reason to say the same of christian virtue, as it is this which gives all the requisite qualities to form an agreeable companion.

The better to judge of this, let us look on the picture which *St. Paul* hath drawn of charity\*, which gives us every feature of chris-

\* 1 Cor. xiii.



Christian virtue, if it be not the very same. It is not ambitious to pique itself upon every point of honour, or to be willing to exalt itself in the detriment of others: It is not mercenary, and is so far from passionately seeking what might belong to it that it recedes from what it has got, and affects not its own interest. It is not crafty or deceitful; there is nothing but freedom and candour in all its actions, and all its words: But I am obliged here, in praising all its excellent qualities, to do as painters do in their pieces wherein they draw but two or three personages intire, and only a hand or a head of all the rest. I have not room to speak at large of all the advantages of charity; I can only name them instead of describing them. She is patient, obliging, humble, compassionate, pleasant; or, in a few words, she is all that can be wish'd for, provided we wish for nothing more than what is lovely, just, and honourable.

And if these are the effects of Christian virtue, as no one can doubt but that they are, ought we not to conclude, that this is the true school of civility and good-breeding? And, if it is requisite for acquiring the grace of God, is it not also to gain the favour of man? Seem not these advan-

tages of charity to be the true advantages of a person very amiable in life? How then can it ever hinder us from having all the agreeableness that is necessary for conversation? And since this divine virtue gives us an inclination to oblige our neighbour, how should it hinder us from pleasing him? How can we think it, after all this, troublesome or melancholy? There is no doubt but that such as have acquired it as they ought, will always be in good humour. It is not more natural for the sun to give the day than for charity to give true cheerfulness. It is its peculiar privilege; and if women would but in the least consider this truth, they would never suffer themselves to be surpris'd by those who endeavour to prove the contrary. Let them but have always in thought these excellent effects of christian virtue, and all the artifices of libertines will never hinder them from putting it into practice.

But what need is there of so many arguments to persuade that which is so conformable to their disposition? I cannot here deny them the praises they deserve, and which are given them by persons under no suspicion of flattery. Women are naturally inclined to charity; they cannot renounce it without renouncing at the same

same time their own inclination. I intend not here to relate what great and noble actions have been done by women when animated with this divine virtue: I shall not describe at large the history of *Cloilda*, who by her prayers prevailed upon her husband *Clovis* to receive the sacrament of baptism, and profess the christian religion: Tho' this action intitles her to the most ample commendation, since she hereby drove heathenism from *France*, and christianity was establish'd throughout the whole kingdom by the means of this holy princess. Nor is it necessary that I should here speak of the natural tenderness of women, which renders them the more susceptible of the love of God:—Many instances likewise of this might be given from writers of indisputable authority who have highly extolled the sex on this account, and particularly that learned and good bishop *M. de Sales*. But omitting these examples, and any further reasoning, I shall conclude with observing, that however due these praises are to the sex, women can have no title to them, unless they find themselves hereby more inclined to this virtue, and are truly sensible  
that

that their guilt will be so much the greater if they neglect the practice of it in their lives and conversations.

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15. All common Forms of Swearing forbidden. Matt. v. 34, 35, 36.

16. We are to prove, and then hold fast that which is good: John i. 46.

17. Our Father which art in Heaven. Matt. vi. 9.

18. Hallowed be thy Name. Matt. vi. 9.

19. Thy Kingdom come. Matt. vi. 10.

20. On Matt. vi. 10. Continued.

21. Thy Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven. Matt. vi. 10.

22. Give us this Day our daily Bread. Matt. vi. 11.

23. And forgive us our Debts, as we forgive our Debtors. Matt. vi. 12.

24. And lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil. Matt. vi. 13.

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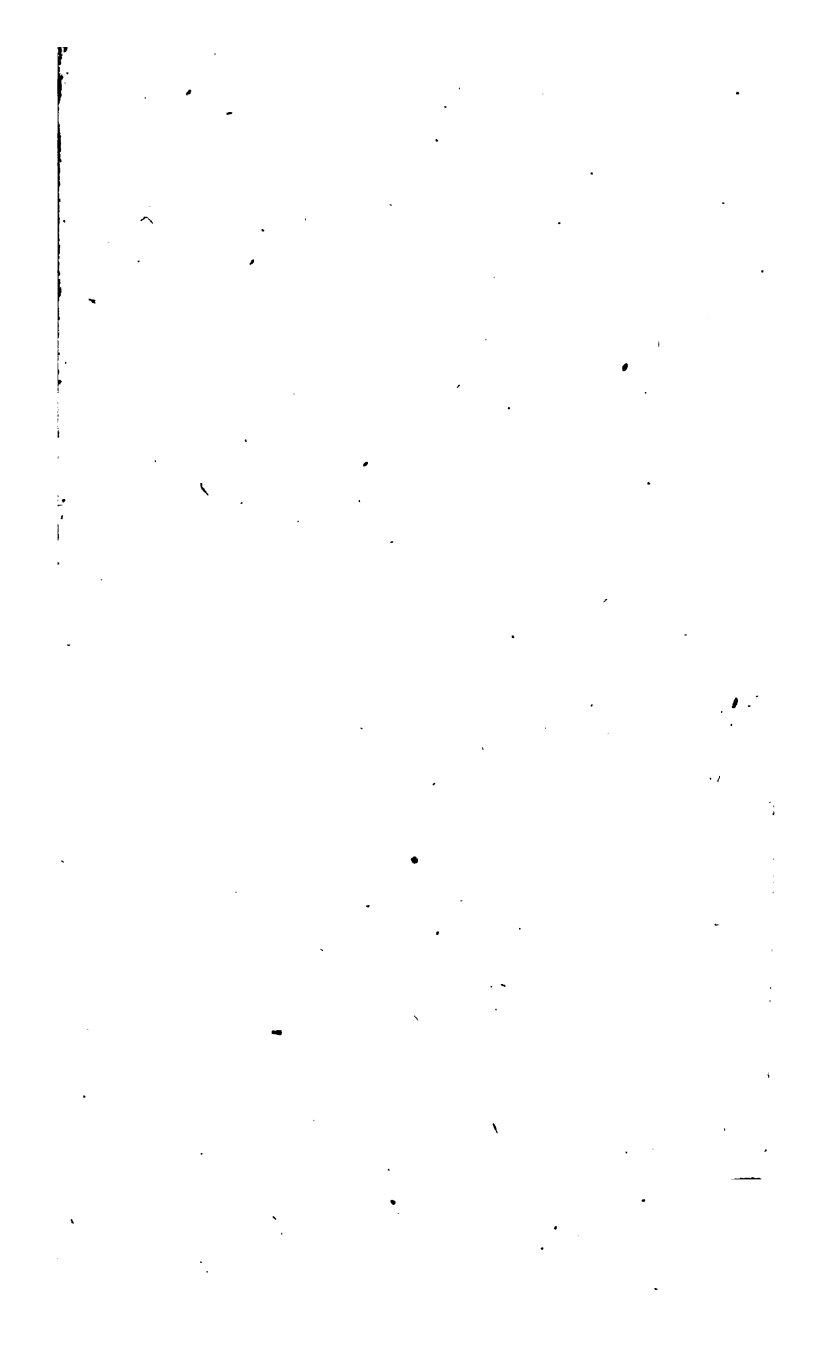
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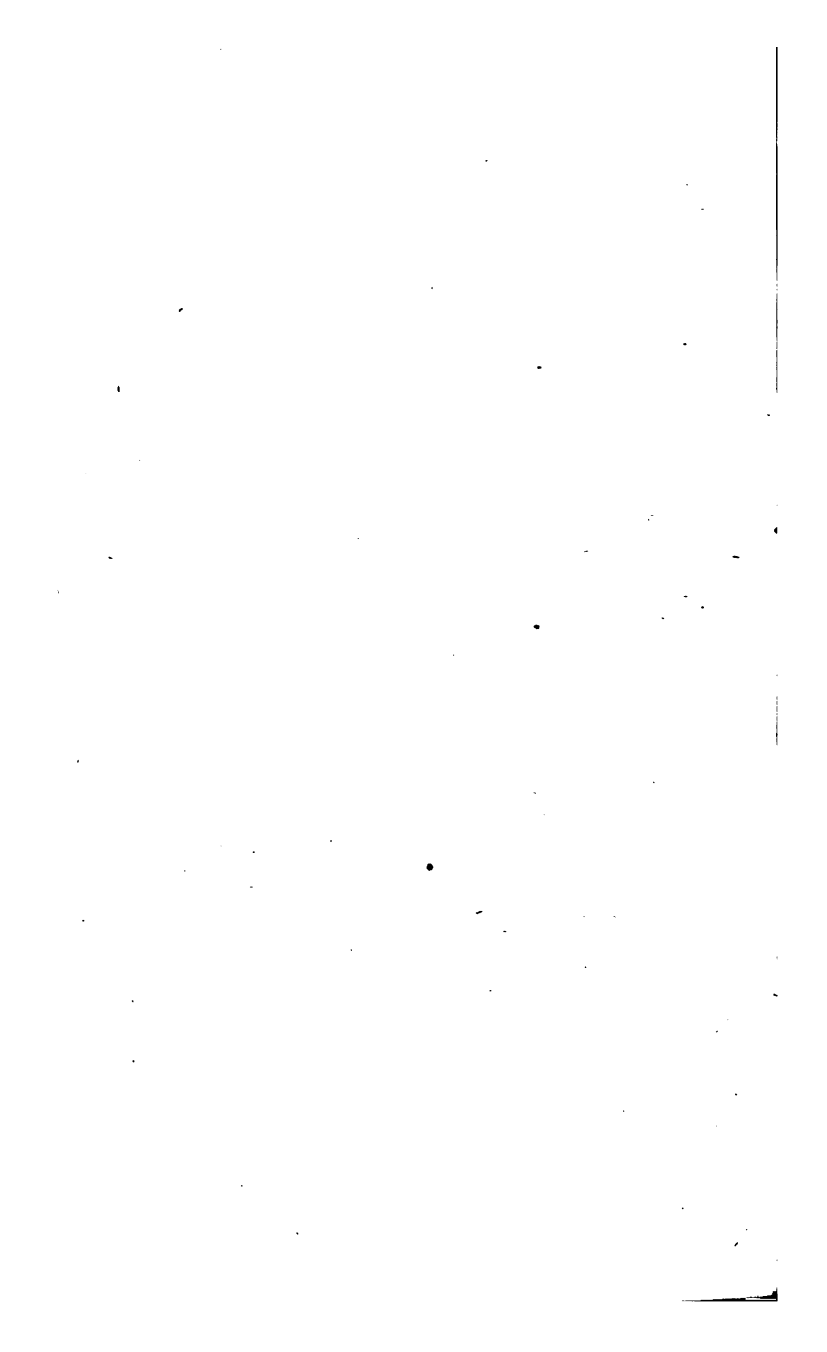
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